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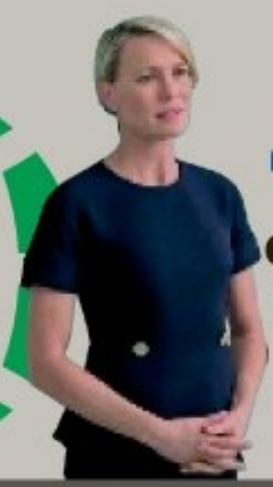

HOUSE OF CARDS

Season 4: Cynical and silly, writes Johanna Schneller

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Your essential daily news | THURSDAY, MARCH 17, 2016

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How to do a ‘Conrad Black’

FINANCE

Sell your house, lease it back, pay rent to live there

Jessica Smith Cross
Metro | Toronto

A Toronto financial planner is now recommending some of her clients do a “Conrad Black.”

Black, the former media mogul, sold his Bridal Path mansion last week, but is leasing it back. He’ll be paid for the sale — likely something in the neighbourhood of $20 million based on a recent valuation — and then pay rent to live there.

Details of the arrangement haven’t been made public. But such agreements can be a smart financial move in the right situation, said Shannon Lee Simmons, a financial planner and founder of The New School of Finance.

“I think what Conrad Black has done is innovative and very cool,” she said. “If you’re selling your house and it’s been your primary residence, it’s a tax-free shot to your portfolio.”

The leaseback makes sense for a sizeable segment of Toronto’s real estate market — boomers who’ve built up substantial equity in their homes as prices have increased for decades.

“But so many retirees don’t want to downsize because they’re emotionally invested in the homes where they raised their kids and they have visions of grandbabies coming over,” Simmons said. “So, this is a cool, creative solution around that where you still cash-in on all the money.”

There’s an upside for potential landlords, too. Unlike most investment-property owners, they’re likely to get tenants who truly care about the home and will keep it in great shape, Simmons said.

Robyn Thompson, president of Castlemark Wealth Management, would also recommend a leaseback for some clients, but only they can come to the right agreement with the buyer. “Yes, they’ll have access to the equity of the home, but what is the lease rate they’ll have to pay and what’s the term?” Thompson said, explaining some of the things to consider.

TTC RIDERSHIP DOWN

Shortfall projected at $30 million this year, with city likely on the hook

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Your essential daily news

Have a safe and happy St. Patrick's Day, Canada!

DOG ATTACK

Charges laid after mauling

Andrew Fifield
Metro

A man has been charged after a small dog was allegedly mauled by a group of larger dogs in an Etobicoke park.

According to police, 81-year-old Kurt Haupt was walking his dachshund, Dacky, in Centennial Park on March 9 when he was approached by another man with four large off-leash dogs.

Police say the larger animals attacked Dacky, who later died from her injuries. The other man gathered his dogs and walked away.

A suspect was later arrested in connection to the attack. A post-arrest search warrant resulted in the seizure of five corso mastiffs.

Kiriakos Nendos, 48, has been charged with mischief, for interfering with the lawful enjoyment of property. He is also expected to be charged under Ontario's dog liability act.

BRAMPTON

Man drowns at club

There is nothing to indicate that the drowning death of a 29-year-old man at an LA Fitness club in Brampton on Tuesday night was suspicious, Peel police said Wednesday.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Noise complaints putting a damper on music scene

LOUD FESTIVALS

Promoters say NIMBYs should adapt to 'urban reality'

Luke Simcoe
Metro | Toronto

Musicians and promoters are calling on the city to stop bowing to noise NIMBYs.

If we don't, we're putting Toronto's future as a "music city" in jeopardy, they said.

"Maybe all you want to do is sit in your backyard sipping tea and reading Margaret Atwood books, but if you live near a park, you should expect that there will be crowds and cultural activity there whether it's an airshow over your head or African musicians performing," said Derek Andrews, a member of Toronto's music advisory council and Luminato Festival curator.

"It's an urban reality and we need to adapt to that reality."

Organizers of Afrofest, a celebration of music and culture in Woodbine Park, announced this week the city had cut their festival permit down to a single day. City staff said the sanction is the result of numerous noise and curfew violations, including last year when the festival ran over time by 90 minutes.

Festivals like TURF, shown here, could become less prevalent in Toronto if the city keeps giving in to people who complain about noise, some members of the music industry say. GETTY IMAGES

Afrofest is disputing the allegations, and others are stepping up to support them.

Michael Murray, director of the Toronto Musicians' Association, said the city needs noise bylaws that privilege cultural vibrancy over sensitive ears.

"We talk a lot about how we want to be a music city, but at what point do you start putting down hard policies?" he said. "We want concerts in the city, and we need to tell people that that's the direction we're going in."

Murray said Toronto could take some pointers from Montreal, where the population has embraced music festivals.

"I think the general citizen in Montreal or Quebec attends festivals more and they accept the summer is about having that feel and attraction in the city. It's just more generally accepted," he said.

Matthew Cutler, spokesman for Toronto Parks, Forestry and Recreation disagreed, saying promoters who ignore the rules are the ones putting a damper on the city's music scene.

"Neighbourhoods in downtown Toronto are quite willing to entertain loud events," he said. "But if the rules and permits aren't followed, that's when neighbourhoods will begin to say they don't want any events."

PROPOSAL

City looking at 45 decibel limit after 11 p.m.

A proposal being considered now at City Hall would limit noise in residential neighbourhoods to 45 decibels after 11 p.m.

It's an effort to establish hard rules about how loud is too loud, but it had already met backlash before the Afrofest decision reignited the debate. The typical volume of a library is about 45 to 50 decibels, and the background noise of Toronto is often much louder, opponents argue.

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Months to wait for answers in shooting

NORTH YORK

Family argues man killed by police was holding phone

It could be months or longer before officials reveal whether the North York man fatally shot by Toronto police on Sunday was carrying a weapon the night he died.

The family of Alex Wettlaufer, the 21-year-old man killed in a dark ravine in Villaways Park, claim he was unarmed at the time of his death and that he was holding a phone, not a weapon.

"He's not a fighting person; he's not a bad person ... doesn't carry any weapons, doesn't do drugs," Timothy Wettlaufer, one of Alex's older brothers, said in an interview Wednesday.

The issue is at the heart of the investigation into Wettlaufer's death, a probe currently being conducted by the Special Investigations Unit, the civilian agency that probes police-related deaths.

The civilian agency released new information Wednesday, confirming that three officers discharged their firearms during the incident, though it's not clear how many times Wettlaufer was shot or which officers' bullets hit him.

But the civilian watchdog says it cannot reveal whether Wettlaufer was armed because the investigation is ongoing. The vital piece of information may not be provided until the probe is completed, a process that typically takes several months or up to a year.

The Wettlaufer family maintains that Alex was on the phone with his mother, Wendy, as police approached. Seconds after hanging up, Wendy — who was in the family home on Adra Villaway — says she could hear the shots ring out in the nearby park.

They are now hoping to find a lawyer to obtain any surveillance video that may have captured parts of the incident, Timothy said. They want to obtain as much information as possible that could help explain how his "soft-hearted" brother wound up fatally shot by police.

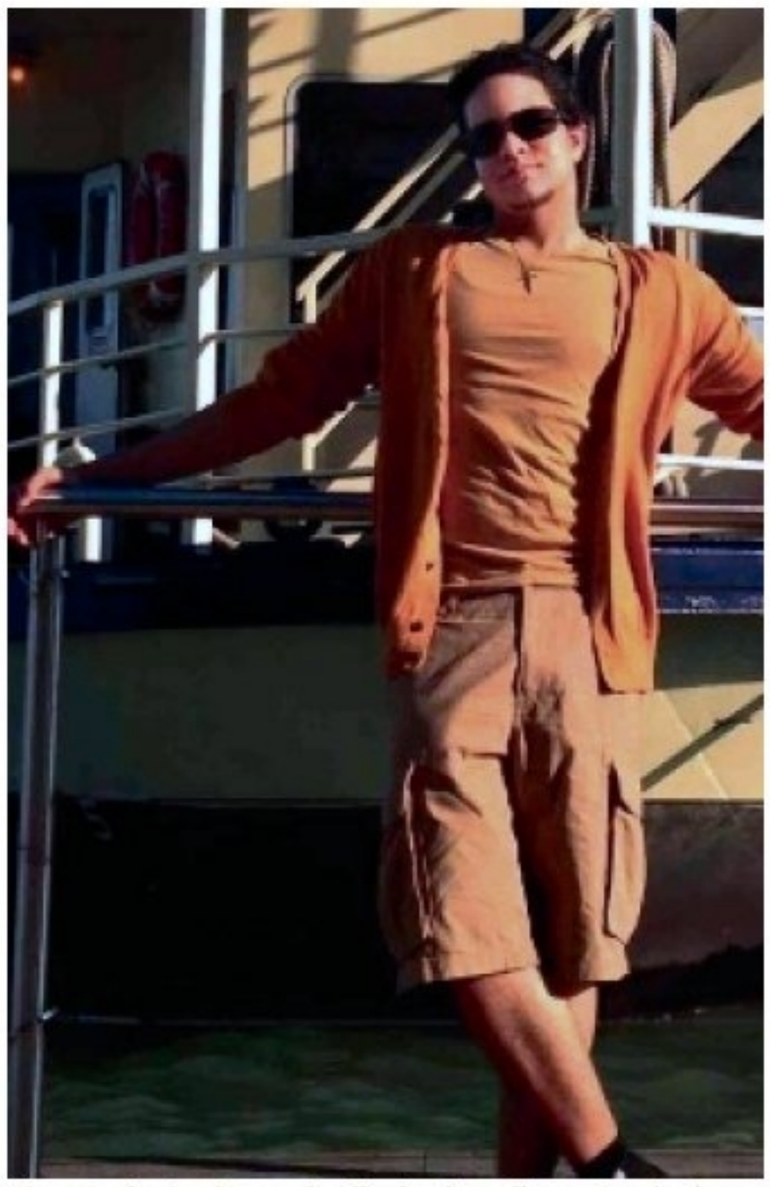
> **He's not a bad person ... doesn't carry any weapons, doesn't do drugs.**
> Timothy Wettlaufer

The family is hopeful TTC cameras may have captured some of the initial altercation, which began near Leslie station. However, Timothy said he is concerned there may be little independent evidence — such as witness accounts or video evidence — from the dark ravine where the shooting occurred.

The incident began late March 13, when officers were called to the Leslie subway station to investigate reports of a fight between two men, one of them allegedly carrying a gun.

One of the men fled to the nearby park, where there was a confrontation with Toronto police, including members of a highly trained tactical unit, the Emergency Task Force (ETF).

Toronto police cannot comment on the investigation, including whether any of the responding officers sported the body-worn cameras being tested in the force's pilot project. It is known, however, that no member of the ETF squad is currently participating in the yearlong project, which involves only officers from two police divisions and from Traffic Services and the Toronto Anti-Violence Intervention Strategy. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



Alex Wettlaufer, 21, was fatally shot by police on Sunday in North York, across the street from Leslie Station. FACEBOOK

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Room writer gives back

CULTURE

Donoghue donates $20K to indigenous arts festival

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

A significant donation from one of Canada's hottest screenwriters is giving a big boost to Toronto's indigenous film industry.

Emma Donoghue, the Ontario author of the novel Room and its subsequent Oscar-nominated screen adaption, has donated $20,000 to the local ImagineNATIVE Film and Media Art Festival.

The donation represents half of Donoghue's recent $40,000 Golden Box Office award.

"It's 20 times larger than the largest donation we've ever received," said Jason Ryle, ImagineNATIVE's executive director. "One does not expect to receive donations like this. We were all very emotional about it."

ImagineNATIVE shines a spotlight on aboriginal projects, from filmmaking to artistic and cultural events, and hosts an annual film festival in October. It also organizes national tours, movie screenings and workshops across the country, with the goal of increasing the aboriginal presence in Canada's film and entertainment industry.

Right: Emma Donoghue was at the TIFF Lightbox earlier this week to receive the Golden Box Office Award. **Above:** ImagineNATIVE executive director Jason Ryle.
RIGHT: THE CANADIAN PRESS; ABOVE: COURTESY OF DOMINIC CHAN

Donoghue's donation is a huge relief for an organization that's always "rubbing pennies together" to make things happen, said Ryle. The sum will be channeled into running workshops for young producers and creative directors, he said.

"We are committed to supporting indigenous filmmakers," he said. "These are incredibly talented people with great ideas but the finances have always been a big issue."

The need for more indigenous film producers and screenwriters has never been greater, said Ryle, adding aboriginal stories are better told by people who have lived them and understand them better.

"There's no need for convincing the industry when the stories are told by indigenous people themselves," he said.

> **One does not expect to receive donations like this.**
> Jason Ryle

IN BRIEF

May be more victims in sexual assault investigation: Police

Police are asking for any further victims to come forward in a sexual assault investigation against a Toronto man. Dwayne Brown, 37, is facing eight charges of sexual assault, and one charge for assault in connection with the investigation.

On March 10, Brown was walking northbound on University Avenue, between Front Street and Queen Street West at around 7 p.m. Police allege he sexually assaulted several women as he was walking.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Probe into attempted child abduction called off

Toronto police have called off an investigation into an attempted child abduction in High Park.

"It has been determined, following an investigation, that there was no child abduction; there was a misunderstanding and this investigation is now resolved," police said in a release issued Wednesday.

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Applicants 'tone down' ethnicity

CAREERS

'Whitening' of resumés prevalent — and effective

It's a disturbing practice called "resumé whitening" and involves deleting telltale signs of race or ethnicity from a CV in the hopes of landing a job.

And it happens more often than you'd think.

According to a two-year study led by University of Toronto researchers, as many as 40 per cent of minority job seekers "whiten" their resumés by adopting Anglicized names and downplaying experience with racial groups to bypass biased screeners and just get their foot in the door.

It's when "Lamar J. Smith" becomes "L. James Smith" or "Lei Zhang" morphs to "Luke Zhang" — and the callback rates soar.

"It's really a wake-up call for organizations to do something to address this problem. Discrimination is still a reality," said Sonia Kang, lead author of Whitened Resumés, Race and Self-Presentation in the Labour Market, to be released in the Administrative Science Quarterly Thursday.

"It shows us that racial minorities aren't just passively receiving this discrimination. They are trying to do something about it."

In the study, only 10 per cent of black job applicants — created by researchers based on real candidate profiles — received callbacks for job interviews if they stuck to their African names and experience with black organizations. However, the callback rate went up to 25.5 per cent if their names were "whitened" and their black experience was removed from their resumés.

In the case of the Asian applicants, only 11.5 per cent received callbacks if they used their Asian-sounding names and experience, compared to 21 per cent using whitened resumés.

When seeking jobs with employers known to have a pro-diversity image, minority job applicants were less likely to "whiten" their resumés, the study found.

But, perhaps most surprising, even with pro-diversity employers, the odds of getting called for an interview were greater when a minority applicant took steps to hide their race.

The study consists of three parts: Focus group interviews with black and Asian university students in both U.S. and Canadian universities about their experience of resumé whitening, a lab experiment on how job seekers tailor resumés to pro-diversity employers and a resumé audit of interview calls from real employers to fictitious job applicants who engaged in varying degrees of resumé whitening.

Thirty-six per cent of the 59 students — 29 blacks and 30 Asians of different disciplines from finance to medicine, law, education and IT — who participated in the in-depth interviews reported they personally engaged in resumé whitening and two-thirds said they knew others who did.

"I am very involved in black organizations on campus.... Association of Black Women, Black Students' Association, Black Christian Fellowship. I was a little hesitant about having so many black organizations on my resumé," a female college senior told researchers. I did take off a couple of black organizations... I think to me it was just trying to tone down the blackness, for lack of a better word."

"Freshman year in my resumé I put my legal name, which is very Chinese-sounding. And then I went to Career Services, and they told me to put my American nickname on it instead," said a female senior of Chinese background.

Participants said they adopted techniques to signal an ability to "fit in" with white employers and coworkers and to show they are "uninterested" in political racial causes.

In part two of the study, students were invited to draft resumés for jobs for two companies advertised as "equal opportunity" employers. The proportion of students who whitened their resumé was up to two times lower when the employer was presented as one that values diversity.

In the third part, fake resumés were sent in response to job ads. For black applicants, the callback gap between unwhitened resumés and those for which both the name and the experiences were whitened was 15.5 percentage points; for Asians, the gap was 9.5 percentage points.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Sonia Kang, an assistant professor of organizational behaviour and HR management, said employers must go beyond the rhetoric of how they appreciate diversity at work. CONTRIBUTED

In their own words

> "I think for me I did take off a couple of black organizations ... just trying to tone down the blackness, for want of a better word.

> "Freshman year in my resumé I put my legal name, which is very Chinese-sounding. And then I went to Career Services, and they told me to put my American nickname on it instead.

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Supporters rally for injection sites

ADDICTION

Supervised sites save lives, say experts

Jessica Smith Cross
Metro | Toronto

Two former mayors and the chief of emergency medicine at Mount Sinai Hospital are among the prominent Torontonians stepping up for supervised injection sites.

The sites save lives and improve the safety of the communities they're in, said Coun. Joe Cressy. He'll be at City Hall with other supporters on Thursday to rally for the issue.

There's been little opposition to the idea since Toronto Public Health unveiled a proposal for three injection sites earlier this week.

Still, Cressy thinks there will be naysayers before everything is set in stone. "That's the nature of politics and life," he said.

Matt Johnson is hoping to hear as many supportive voices as possible. As a long-time injection drug user who has stared overdoses in the eye, it's an issue of life and death.

"When I've used at home alone, there have been times when it's come really close and it's terrifying — I don't want to die," Johnson said. "I'm not doing this because I want to die."

The evidence for supervised injections sites — the facts that got those prominent Torontonians onside — is so strong they can convince anyone they're a good idea, as long as they value the lives of drug users, he said.

"Some people say people who use drugs are worthless. But we aren't worthless, we have families, we have friends and people who care for us," he said.

Matt Johnson is a member of the Toronto Harm Reduction Alliance. LIZ BEDDALL / METRO

MURDER

Police reach out to public in cold case

Toronto Police are appealing to the public to help find the suspect of a 2002 murder case.

Suleiman Abdi Ahmed was 18 when police allege he was involved in the murder of Mahad Tahlil, 20.

Police responded to an Esso gas station at 261 Dixon Rd. at around 12:30 a.m. on Sept. 2, 2002. where they found the victim suffering from stab wounds.

He died a short time after arriving at the hospital.

Ahmed, 32, is wanted on a Canada-wide warrant. Police warn anyone who sees him to call 911 immediately.

Homicide investigators are asking the public to share their video on social media with hopes that it reaches members of the Etobicoke area, where the murder occurred.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Suleiman Abdi Ahmed
TORONTO POLICE SERVICE

POLICE

Dentists charged with fraud in billing scam

Two dentists are facing fraud charges following an Ontario Provincial Police investigation into improper billings at Mount Sinai Hospital.

The OPP allege that Dr. George Sandor and Dr. Cameron Clokie, both dental surgeons, were charging OHIP for surgeries that they did not assist in, as well as adding insured billings to surgeries.

Sandor was arrested on Jan. 20 in Oulu, Finland, and escorted back to Canada in February to face three counts of fraud, totalling $68,000.

Clokie was arrested on March 2 in Toronto. He is facing two counts of fraud amounting to over $139,000 in value. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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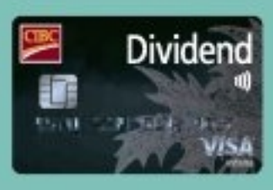

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T.O. transit isn't on track

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Ridership below target; $30M deficit projected

Falling TTC ridership is on track to cause a budget shortfall of $30 million this year.

And the cash-strapped city is likely to be on the hook to make up the lost fares, with cutbacks that were already imposed on the TTC's 2016 operating budget leaving little wiggle room, officials say.

It's the third continuous year ridership numbers have fallen behind TTC targets.

With ridership four million rides below target through the first two months of the year, year-end totals are now expected to be behind by 13 million rides, which would mean a deficit of about $30 million, says a report to the board. If the trend continues unabated, ridership would be 23 million below target.

"These results will have a significant negative impact on the TTC operating budget," the report says. "In recognition of this, management has undertaken various actions and is considering further actions in an effort to mitigate the negative budget impact."

That new year-end projection of 540 million rides would also see ridership totals barely increase over last year's 538 million rides.

The TTC warned 2015 ridership was slipping last October as projections decreased from 545 million riders to 539 million. Actual riders totalled 538 million.

At the time, deputy CEO Chris Upfold blamed the system being over capacity.

"We're full and our customers know that," he said then.

TTC spokesperson Brad Ross said Wednesday the numbers outlined in the new report won't immediately impact daily service. But on the long-term ramifications, Ross said he couldn't speculate.

"If the TTC budget becomes unbalanced and we go into deficit then the city would be required to help us out," he said.

To try to prevent a significant deficit, TTC management is proposing several ways to slow costs and increase riders, including freezing planned service improvements on some routes, for example, by not adding any additional buses during busy hours.

TTC Chair Coun. Josh Colle said he's glad the board is being proactively updated now.

"It's still quite early so I'm confident (ridership will improve), but it could put us in a position of having to make some decisions," he said.

Coun. Joe Mihevc, who sits on the board, has also raised concerns based on his anecdotal streetcar-riding experiences that all-door boarding has caused "a lot" of lost revenue from those not paying their fares.

The TTC ridership report speaks to that concern, saying proof-of-payment "has not resulted in a surge of fare evasion."

Inspection rates at 4 to 5 per cent are keeping evasion rates in the range of 2 per cent, which the report says in an industry standard. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

A lineup on King Street at Yonge, but numbers are still down. RICHARD LAUTENS/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

4M

TTC ridership is behind by 4 million transit users over the first two months of 2016.

13M

If the trend continues through the year, TTC ridership will be 13 million rides below expectations.

$30M

Should this be the case, it will create a $30 million budgetary shortfall by year's end.

540

The new projected year-end total for TTC ridership is 540 million rides — merely 2 million more than the transit system's 2015 totals.

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0316

Users want regulations for Uber

RIDESHARING

Survey: Most don't think service is safer than cabs

When it comes to Uber, Toronto-area residents are less concerned with what the ride-sharing company is doing to the taxi industry than they are with their personal safety in the absence of municipal regulations.

An independent Environics Research Group survey found 56 per cent of residents support Uber with the support being stronger among those who use the service. Only 49 per cent of non-users support it.

But 60 per cent of respondents overall were concerned about the lack of municipal licensing and the implications for their safety with unlicensed Uber drivers.

The results were released Wednesday in conjunction with an online discussion platform designed to gather residents' thoughts on regulating the app-based service.

"We know how the taxis feel, we know that the city is spending a lot of time right now researching and developing policy, we know how Uber feels and what they are experiencing. The voice we felt we weren't hearing was that of residents and users and people living in the municipalities where the service is either being accessed or being considered within the larger transportation system," said Environics vice-president Jodi Shanoff.

It's a chance for people to say how they would expect the city to regulate a service like Uber, she said.

The Environics survey showed that most people don't believe Uber drivers are safer than cabs. Only 15 per cent of Uber clients strongly agreed Uber cars are safer and only 4 per cent of non-users strongly agreed.

60%

The percentage of respondents concerned about the lack of municipal regulation surrounding Uber.

Although people will rely on Uber itself to provide some safety assurances, Shanoff said, "Ultimately people are going to rely on the city to establish the regulatory framework that's going to give the sense of security that there's accountability and recourse in the event that there are safety issues with the service."

Concern about Uber infringing on the taxi industry was minor among survey respondents, she said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The more people use ride and bike sharing or ride apps like Uber, the more likely they are to also take transit and own fewer cars per household. That's the key finding of a new U.S. study suggesting there are synergies between ride sourcing and transit.
CARLOS OSORIO/ TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

ETOBICOKE LAKESHORE

Councillors want GO stop to ease transit woes in riding

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

Two councillors are pushing for a GO station at Park Lawn as Metrolinx continues to ponder a potential increase of station stops.

Mark Grimes of Ward 6 and his counterpart Justin Di Ciano of Ward 5 have started a petition collecting signatures of support for the platform to be built in the Etobicoke Lakeshore area.

Justin Di Ciano TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Both wards have experienced intense residential growth for many years, with tens of thousands of people coming to live in the area as condo developments continue to sprout.

But transit has continued to be "inefficient" and "unreliable" for area residents, said Di Ciano.

"What we have here is a traffic nightmare," he said, describing thousands of cars trying to make their way into the city through the "two-lane bottleneck that's the Lakeshore."

"It has been just too much intensification without a sound transit plan. Transit has always been an afterthought here."

More residential development is likely to come to the area and, once complete, the area could be home to as many as 28,000 residents. It's only fitting to add a GO station stop and allow people to depend less on cars, he said.

"People would literally walk to the trains and right into the city," he said, hopeful the petition — which has so far gained over 800 signatures — will help support the case. "In a democracy when people yell loud and clear, politicians will listen," he said.

The province is expected to come up with the final list on new GO station stops early in the summer.

Mark Grimes ANDREW FRANCIS WALLACE/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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French's cut into PC sales: Loblaw memo

GROCERIES

Decision to delist ketchup had nothing to do with Heinz

A leaked internal memo sent to some Loblaw employees said the grocery chain decided to stop stocking French's ketchup because it was "cannibalizing" sales of its in-house President's Choice variety.

Loblaw confirmed the memo's existence but said it wasn't an official one.

The memo addressed to grocery managers and retailers said it intended to explain why French's ketchup was being pulled from store shelves.

"We are in the process of delisting French's ketchup because it is cannibalizing the sales of PC ketchup and has had little impact to Heinz ketchup," reads the memo.

French's ketchup, back at Loblaw. RENE JOHNSTON/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The Canadian Press obtained a photo of the memo from someone who says they are a Loblaw employee. The employee, who wished to remain anonymous due to fears of workplace reprisal, identified the sender of the memo as a senior director at the company.

Loblaw, however, described the sender as a mid-level employee who is a member of the company's operations team for a group of stores.

"The memo was unofficial, misinformed and sent by a staff member prior to (Tuesday's) decision to restock French's ketchup," Kevin Groh, vice-president of corporate affairs and communication, said Wednesday in a statement.

"Customer preference was the single reason the product was removed from our shelves, and the single reason it is back."

Loblaw announced Tuesday it was reversing its decision to discontinue selling French's ketchup following social media outcry. French's ketchup became an Internet darling after a man's Facebook post lauded the U.S.-based company for using 100 per cent Canadian-grown tomatoes.

The leaked memo disputes the notion that French's ketchup is a Canadian-made product. It says French's ketchup contains Canadian-grown tomatoes, but it is made in the U.S.

A spokesperson for French's said the ketchup it sells in Canada is produced in both Canada and the U.S.

Loblaw's President's Choice ketchup, on the other hand, sources its tomatoes from California, but is produced in Canada. THE CANADIAN PRESS

POLITICS

Wynne gets behind Ontario tomatoes

Premier Kathleen Wynne is relishing her government's role in the Ontario ketchup flap.

Amid the attention surrounding French's ketchup, Wynne noted on Wednesday that Queen's Park helped out in 2014.

"When Heinz left Leamington and got out of the ketchup business in southwest Ontario, our government worked with a new company, (Highbury) Canco, to keep that plant open, to upgrade it," she said.

"We made an investment of $2.5 million ... and that is how the French's story became a success story in Leamington," the premier said in Waterloo, where she awarded a grant of up to $15 million to tech firm Sandvine.

"So these partnerships grow our economy and they create jobs."

Later, she tweeted a photo of herself purchasing French's ketchup with the caption "proud to buy Ontario-grown."

The American-bottled sauce uses Leamington tomatoes processed at the historic plant Heinz abandoned two years ago when it moved operations stateside, throwing about 750 employees out of work.

Kathleen Wynne STEVE RUSSELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Highbury Canco, launched by a former Heinz plant manager and some private investors, now has 400 workers, up from 250 in 2014, and anticipates hiring more as production lines increase.

The ketchup has been a rallying cry for two weeks with NDP MPP Taras Natyshak (Essex) starting an online petition to make sure Heinz is no longer served at the legislature.

"The promotion of French's ketchup would greatly support local tomato producers, local workers and communities across Essex County," Natyshak said. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Canada's time to 'step up'

UNITED NATIONS

Trudeau aims to win back seat on security council in 2021

Canada will vie to win back a seat on the United Nations Security Council, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says.

"We are determined to help the UN make even greater strides in support of its goals for all humanity," Trudeau said Wednesday in the lobby of UN headquarters in New York.

"My friends, it's time. It's time for Canada to step up once again," Trudeau said.

Canada will seek to win back a seat for the 2021-22 term, Trudeau said.

As he made his much-anticipated announcement, Trudeau said that Canada has a long and honoured history with the United Nations that dates back to its founding in 1945.

"We are determined to revitalize Canada's role in peacekeeping," Trudeau said.

He said that his government has made pushes forward in recent months on issues like gender equality, refugee resettlement, respect for diversity, stability in the Mideast and answers to climate change, all of which are in sync with UN goals.

Under the Charter, the Security Council has primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security. It has 15 members, and each member has one vote. Under the Charter, all member states are obligated to comply with Council decisions.

The Security Council attempts to settle disputes peacefully and makes recommendations for terms of settlement in disputes. It can also impose sanctions and authorize the use of force.

The 190-plus members of the General Assembly won't vote on new candidates until the fall of 2020 so it will take at least five more years before Canada could start a two-year term.

That means Trudeau will have to win another federal election in 2019 if he wants to personally see Canada come "back."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE/WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau meets with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon at the United Nations in New York on Wednesday. KENA BETANCUR/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

PM talks gender equality

Setting aside parental leave that can only be taken by fathers may be a way of improving the flexibility available to young families, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau said Wednesday before a clearly approving audience at the United Nations.

He said he and his government are trying to make Parliament more family friendly, saying it's time to update an institution "designed for old, white guys."

Parliamentary travel requirements and sitting hours can be barriers to women with young children, but it's time to challenge institutions and find ways to make them work better, Trudeau said.

Businesses and organizations can be encouraged to be more open to equality, he added. "One of the things that has shown effectiveness is just making people report explicitly on the gender balance within their organization, within their boards at the highest levels," he said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Two baby walruses on the way in Quebec

AQUARIUM DU QUEBEC

Pair of females both pregnant, a rare event in captivity

Quebec City's aquarium might soon be blessed with two very large bundles of joy in a somewhat unexpected and exceedingly rare occurrence.

The Aquarium du Quebec's two female walruses, Arnaliaq and Samka, are both pregnant and due to give birth in April and early June respectively.

It was a pleasant surprise, says curator Jill Marvin.

"There are some people who can try for 10 years and never get pregnant and others who blink and they're pregnant," Marvin said in an interview. "Well, I think we blinked ... and we got two females pregnant and, to my knowledge, no one else has ever had that."

Since 1930, only 19 female walruses have become pregnant in captivity in North America. Marvin says 15 resulted in live births, with just six surviving beyond one year. Only one reached adulthood.

Hey, big mamas! Two pregnant walruses are sparking excitement at a Quebec City aquarium. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Aquarium staff had long hoped the two females would get pregnant as they and their male counterpart, Boris, reached sexual maturity.

"One of the problems is the male and the female don't cycle at the same time," Marvin said.

But as the aquarium soon found out, the trio's cycles were very much in tune.

"The fact we have two females pregnant at this young age by our own male, I think there are a lot of proud adopted mothers, grandmothers," Marvin said.

> **"I think there are a lot of proud adopted mothers, grandmothers.**
> Curator Jill Marvin

Boris and Samka are both 10, while Arnaliaq is 12. Walruses in the wild can live up to 40 years.

The first signs in the 15-to-16-month gestation period came in the fall: irregular weight gain, increased appetite and a bigger belly.

Then in January, an ultrasound on Samka revealed a heartbeat and not long after came one for Arnie, as she is nicknamed.

The last time a walrus is believed to have been born under human care was at Germany's Hagenbeck Zoo in 2014.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

POVERTY

Funding housing big task: Advocates

Justin Trudeau's Liberal government has promised to invest in affordable housing, with details in next week's federal budget.

Municipalities are optimistic that the investment, which experts say has been shrinking since the 1990s, will reduce homelessness across Canada.

Anti-poverty advocates say they expect the government to put hundreds of millions in new spending into an existing homeless program, the Homelessness Partnering Strategy, and fund new affordable housing units, helping those in shelters, temporary or shabby housing because they can't afford rent.

An internal government report from 2014, obtained by The Canadian Press under the Access to Information Act, suggested that cutting shelter use by even one-fifth may be overly ambitious and difficult to achieve nationally.

Tim Richter, president of the Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness, says,"This is a crisis 25 years in the making and it's going to take a significant investment from the federal government to rectify it." THE CANADIAN PRESS

IN BRIEF

B.C. to require sex assault policies at universities
British Columbia plans to pass a law requiring post-secondary institutions to have sexual assault policies. Advocates say many universities lack standalone sexual assault policies for responding to complaints and outlining support services. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Arms sale going ahead
Justin Trudeau is defending the decision to maintain a $15-billion contract to sell light armoured vehicles to Saudi Arabia, signed by the Harper regime. He says countries and companies need to know contracts OK'd by one government will be honoured by a new one.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Obama picks high court judge

U.S. POLITICS

Nomination could put GOP in non-winning predicament

Ignoring Republican threats, U.S. President Barack Obama nominated appeals court judge Merrick Garland to the Supreme Court on Wednesday, thrusting a respected moderate jurist and former prosecutor into the centre of an election-year clash over the future of the nation's highest court.

Obama cast the 63-year-old Garland as "a serious man and an exemplary judge" deserving of a full hearing and a Senate confirmation vote, despite Republican vows to deny him both. Standing in the White House Rose Garden with Garland, Obama argued the integrity of the court was at stake and appealed to the Senate to "play it straight" in filling the seat left vacant by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia.

"It's supposed to be above politics," Obama said of the high court. "It has to be. And it should stay that way."

U.S. President Barack Obama walks with Judge Merrick B. Garland, before announcing his nomination to the Supreme Court, Wednesday. GETTY IMAGES

Republican leaders, however, held to their refusal to consider any nominee, saying the seat should be filled by the next president after this year's election. Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell spoke with Garland by phone but did not change his position that "the American people will have a voice." He said he would not be holding "a perfunctory meeting but he wished Judge Garland well," a spokesman said.

Still, some in the GOP ranks were wary of sticking to a no-hearing, no-vote, not-even-meeting stance.

Garland was to talk by phone to Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Charles Grassley, and four other Republican senators — Jeff Flake of Arizona, Susan Collins of Maine, James Inhofe of Oklahoma and Kelly Ayotte of New Hampshire, also said they would meet with him.

> "It's supposed to be above politics. It has to be. And it should stay that way."
> President Barack Obama on U.S. Supreme Court

The judge will visit senators on Thursday at the Capitol, before the Senate breaks for a two-week recess.

The White House said that was evidence Garland's weighty resume and bipartisan credentials were putting pressure on Republicans.

Garland is the chief judge for the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit, a court whose influence over federal policy and national security matters has made it a proving ground for potential justices.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

American sentenced to 15 years in North Korea

North Korea's highest court sentenced an American tourist to 15 years in prison with hard labour for subversion on Wednesday, weeks after authorities presented him to media and he tearfully confessed that he had tried to steal a propaganda banner.

Otto Warmbier, 21, a University of Virginia undergraduate, was convicted and sentenced in a one-hour trial in North Korea's Supreme Court.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Morocco cuts peacekeeping

The Moroccan government is reducing its staff and support for the UN peacekeeping operation in the Western Sahara to protest UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's recent comments about the disputed territory. Ban recently visited Saharan refugee camps and referred to Morocco's "occupation" of Western Sahara, a former Spanish colony that was annexed in 1975. Morocco regarded the term as an insult. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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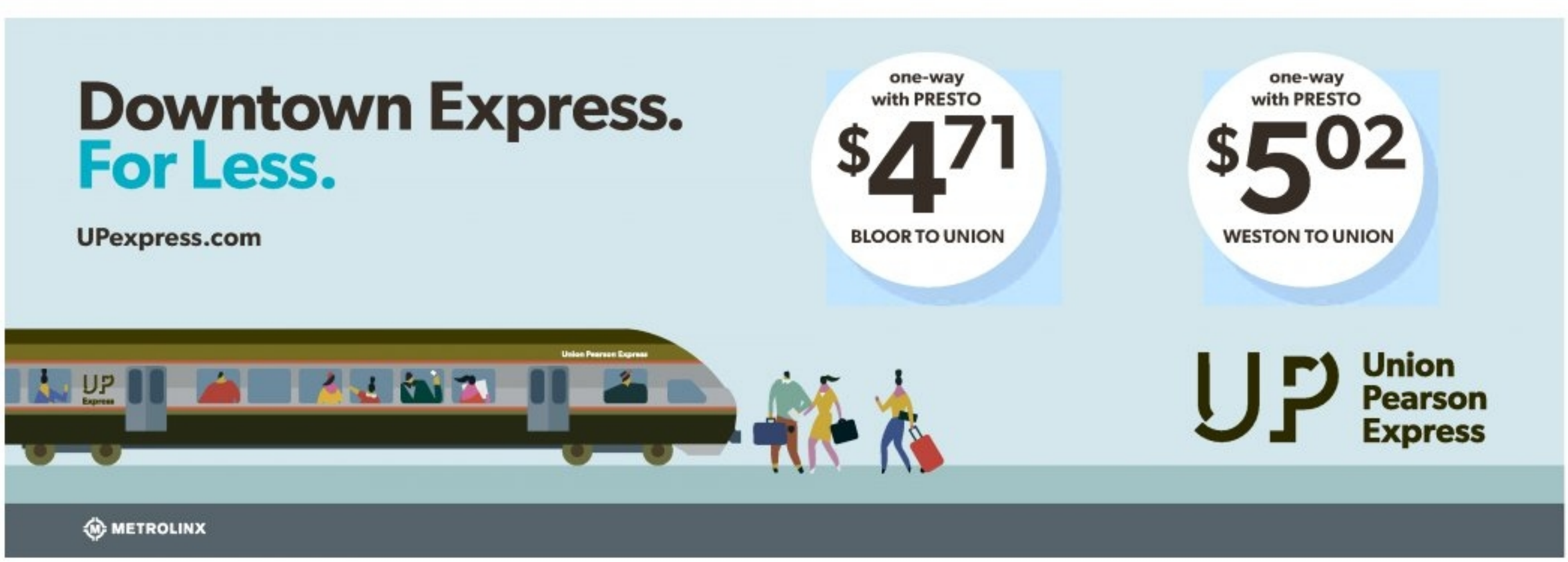

Syrians mark fifth year since uprising

CONFLICT

War rages on as Moscow rises, U.S. retreats, Syria suffers

As Syrians mark the fifth anniversary of the uprising against President Bashar Assad, here are some of the key events in the conflict:

March 2011: Protests erupt in the city of Dara over security forces' detention of a group of boys accused of painting anti-government graffiti on the walls of their school. On March 18, security forces open fire on a protest in Dara, killing four people in what activists regard as the first deaths of the uprising.
August 2011: U.S. President Barack Obama calls on Assad to resign and orders Syrian government assets frozen.
March 2013: After advancing in the north, rebel forces capture Raqqah, a city of 500,000 people on the Euphrates River and the first major population centre controlled by the opposition.
August – September 2013: A chemical weapons attack in the Damascus suburbs kills hundreds. Obama, blaming Assad's government, says the U.S. has a responsibility to respond and puts it to a vote in Congress. Russia proposes instead that Syria give up its chemical weapons, averting military strikes.
October 2013: Syria destroys its chemical weapons production equipment.
June 2014: Syrians in government areas vote in presidential elections. Assad, one of three candidates, overwhelmingly wins with 88.7 per cent.
August 2014: Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) militants release video of the beheading of American journalist James Foley, the first of five Westerners to be beheaded by the group.
September 2015: Russia begins launching airstrikes in Syria in support of Assad's forces.
November 2015: Seventeen nations meeting in Vienna adopt a timeline for a transition plan in Syria that includes a new constitution as well as UN-administered parliamentary and presidential elections within 18 months.
February 2016: Indirect peace talks between the Syrian government and opposition in Geneva collapse a few days after starting, over a Russian-backed Syrian army offensive in Aleppo. The U.S. and Russia announce a partial ceasefire in Syria will start Feb. 27.
March 2016: The UN's Syria envoy says indirect peace talks will resume in Geneva on March 14. Russian President Vladimir Putin also announces that his armed forces will begin withdrawing from Syria.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

+ AUTONOMY

Kurds plan to declare a federal region in Syria

Syrian Kurds are preparing a plan to declare a federal region in the area they control across northern Syria, saying Wednesday it is a model for a more decentralized government in which all ethnic groups would be represented.

Although the idea might seem like a way forward after five years of civil war, it faces big obstacles: It was promptly dismissed by the government of Syrian President Bashar Assad and the rebels who oppose him, both fearing it would lead to a partition of the country.

Turkey also opposes it, wary of the growing Kurdish influence in the border region of northern Syria and its effect on its own Kurdish minority.

But Ahmad Araj, a Kurdish official in northern Syria, insisted that a federal system containing such a region, which would effectively combine three Kurdish-led autonomous areas, is in fact meant to preserve national unity and prevent Syria from breaking up along sectarian lines.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Syrian refugee Mariam Aloush, 8, from Homs, Syria, poses for a picture at an informal tented settlement near the Syrian border in Jordan. "I remember our home in Syria and my school there. I just want to go back," said Mariam.

Syrian refugee Mohammed Bandar, 12, from Hama, Syria. "I want to become a doctor to be able to help people," said Mohammed.

Syrian refugee boy Ahmad Zughayar, 6, from Deir el-Zour, Syria. "I remember the sound of bombings on homes in Deir el-Zour," said Ahmad.

ALL PHOTOS MUHAMMED MUHEISEN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Yasmeen Mohammed, 11, from Eastern Ghouta, Syria. Yasmeen, whose family fled their town, said she misses her old life. "All I want is to go back to my school in Syria and see my friends," she said.

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RESETTLEMENT

'Urgent' need to aid migrants: EU

The European Union told member states Wednesday they "urgently need to deliver" on commitments to resettle more refugees on the continent, as the number of refugees arriving in Greece since the start of 2015 reached the 1 million mark.

The demand came on the eve of a summit of leaders from the EU and Turkey that aims to try and limit the number of refugees coming to Europe.

"We need to see a substantial increase in relocations in the coming days and weeks," EU migration commissioner Dimitris Avramopoulos said. "With the humanitarian situation in Greece getting more acute every day, member states urgently need to deliver on their commitments and prevent a further deterioration of the situation for refugees in Greece."

UN refugee agency envoy Angelina Jolie was in Athens on Wednesday to visit overcrowded refugee shelters, as the number of refugees stranded in Greece neared 44,000.

Success of the deal with Turkey relies heavily on scaling up of EU's relocation scheme for mostly Syrian refugees. Fewer than 1,000 people have so far been resettled in the EU under the scheme, but the European Commission said Wednesday it wanted 20,000 placements in the next two months.

2,000

There is now space for up to 2,000 more people in shelters near Idomeni.

Greek officials reiterated Wednesday they had no plans to use force to evacuate a squalid refugee camp at Idomeni, on the Greek-Macedonian border, where some 14,000 people are living in harsh conditions.

So far, refugees camped out there have ignored government appeals to move to other shelters in northern Greece, still hoping that Balkan borders will reopen. That could change if the Brussels summit confirms that the way north will remain closed in the long term.

"The people there take as strong an interest in the summit meeting as if they were journalists ... and everyone is waiting to see what will happen tomorrow," Giorgos Kyritsis, spokesman for Greece's emergency response committee, told the AP. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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ANTI-BIAS EDUCATION

New app splits cheque based on privilege

Luke Simcoe
Metro | Toronto

A new app can help you check your privilege when it comes time to split the cheque.

EquiTable takes a restaurant bill, divides it by the number of diners and adjusts how much each person owes based on the wage gap between genders and races. So, a white man out for dinner with a black woman would fork over more cash to cover the bill.

"It doesn't split the bill equally; it splits it equitably," said the app's creator, Luna Malbroux, who noted the wage gap calculation is based on data from the U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics.

Malbroux, a comedian and anti-bias educator from California, admits the app has its tongue planted firmly in cheek but said it's a fun way to start a conversation about a serious issue.

> **It doesn't split the bill equally, it splits it equitably.**
> Luna Malbroux, EquiTable creator

"I hope it helps people think a little bit more about how the wage gap affects different people," she said.

In Canada, a recent report showed women earn an average of $8,000 less a year than men, a wage gap that's twice the global average.

Malbroux said the gap grows larger when factors such as race or disability are factored in.

EquiTable plans to launch on iOS later this week.

NEWSPAPERS PUBLISHER STEPS DOWN John Cruickshank has announced he is stepping down as publisher of the Toronto Star and president of the Star Media Group, effective May 4. His final day coincides with Torstar's annual meeting. He will continue to serve as co-chairman of Canadian Press Enterprises (CPE) and as one of Torstar's directors on the CPE board. "Today, I am announcing that I'm ready to leave scaling new journalistic heights to someone with less-arthritic limbs and more recently acquired tools and skills," Cruickshank said in a statement on Wednesday.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Women get career help

RETURN TO WORK

Program aims to get women in finance back on track

Meric Koksal, pictured on the CIBC trading floor in Toronto.
CHRIS YOUNG/THE CANADIAN PRESS

In 2012, after a 12-year career working for global investment banks in Asia and the United States, Meric Koksal did what many women do at some point in their lives: she put her career on pause.

Koksal wanted to spend more time with her two young daughters and pursue her interest in pilates. After three years, Koksal moved to Canada in 2014 with an eye to getting back into finance.

Through her networking efforts, Koksal discovered the Return to Bay Street Program, run by advocacy and networking group Women in Capital Markets.

The program, now in its fifth year, has helped 22 women including Koksal return to their careers in finance by setting them up with four-month paid contracts at large Canadian financial institutions. Twenty-one of those women have since landed full-time jobs.

This year, Return to Bay Street is expanding to Montreal, starting with a workshop next Tuesday that will help candidates prepare for the application process.

Jennifer Reynolds, the president and CEO of Women in Capital Markets, says she hopes some of the contracts secured for applicants this year will be in Montreal, where National Bank, one of the participating financial institutions, has a sizable presence.

Reynolds says part of the program's success has been rooted in the fact that it allows women to re-enter the industry at a similar level to where they were when they left — rather than starting from scratch in a junior position such as an associate.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Thursday, March 17, 2016

CHANTAL HÉBERT ON LEADERSHIP ON THE LEFT

Most New Democrats would not be terribly unhappy to see Mulcair bow out. But those who believe he is all that stands in the way of a less centrist NDP are taking their dreams for reality.

As the New Democrats ponder the future of their federal party and leadership, here are a few inconvenient truths they might have to face up to.

1 Yes, the NDP lost the last federal campaign on a fiscal and social platform that the Liberals could have written. The key planks of yearly balanced budgets and a national childcare program were lifted from outdated red books. It was a decidedly middle-of-the-road document.

But the party has also never won an election on a platform that was not centrist. That was true in Saskatchewan in the days of Alan Blakeney and Roy Romanow, and in Manitoba under Howard Pawley, Gary Doer and Greg Selinger.

Over the last decade Nova Scotia's NDP hugged the centre all the way to a solo term in government. And Rachel Notley did not win power in Alberta last spring on the promise of a socialist revolution.

Overall, the NDP has tended to do best in provinces where it could substitute itself for a weak Liberal party. But a stronger New Democrat presence has not translated into more progressive governance in those provinces than the Canadian average.

In the big picture, the NDP's finish last October was its second-best ever. By comparison, the last time voters had coalesced behind the Liberals to usher out the Conservatives was 1993 and the New Democrats were left with nine seats, three short of the minimum required to hold official party status in the House of Commons.

The NDP has tended to do best in provinces where it could substitute itself for a weak Liberal party.

MIDDLE MAN The problem with the NDP's 2015 federal-election platform under Thomas Mulcair was not that it veered too far to the right, but that it was risk-averse and forgettable, Chantal Hébert writes. THE CANADIAN PRESS

From the outside, one of the glaring weaknesses of the last NDP platform was not that it leaned too far to the right but that it was risk-adverse to the point of being eminently forgettable. But then, the same could be said of Jack Layton's 2011 platform.

2 The next federal election is almost four years away and the prospect of a national victory for the NDP is possibly even more remote. But the party does not live or die on the sole basis of its federal performance. British Columbia, Ontario and Alberta — to name just those three — will all be going to the polls before 2019.

Some NDP activists would have the federal party adopt the so-called LEAP manifesto. It would, among things, commit a New Democrat government to reject trade deals, oppose new pipelines and ensure fossil fuels stay in the ground.

For the record, the Greens have promoted some of the LEAP ideas for a while and found only modest traction for them. And in the last British Columbia election, NDP fortunes went in decline after the party firmed up its anti-pipeline rhetoric. It was a strategic move designed to make a dent in Green support but ultimately a call that cost more votes than it attracted.

The NDP would be more likely to implode than to ever unite behind the LEAP manifesto.

3 It is an urban legend that the 2012 leadership campaign saw the federal New Democrats choose the quest for power over party principles. In fact, the winner, the runner-up and the third-place candidate in that race were all political pragmatists.

Mulcair had spent his provincial political career on the Liberal benches of the national assembly in Quebec. But Brian Topp — who finished second — had cut his teeth in the backrooms of Romanow's centrist Saskatchewan governments and helped steer the federal NDP in the same direction under Layton. Nathan Cullen finished a strong third on a platform to seek a formal alliance with the Liberals.

When some defeated MPs opine that they no longer recognize the NDP in the party that Mulcair leads, one can only wonder what they think it would have looked like under the men who were the second and third choices of the membership more than three years ago.

Most New Democrats would not be terribly unhappy to see Mulcair bow out. He might not even earn enough support on a confidence vote next month to stay on. But those who believe he is all that stands in the way of a less centrist NDP are taking their dreams for reality. If the New Democrats' choices boiled down to keeping their current leader or going hard left, my money would be on Mulcair.

Chantal Hébert is a national affairs writer. Her column appears in Metro every Thursday.

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

metroview

The media couldn't have helped Trump more if he paid us

We knew we were doing it. We just couldn't help ourselves.

And if Trump makes it to the White House, many will blame the media, in part, for his victory.

Who could argue with them? The coverage has been overwhelming. From the start, we were hooked on Trump like a bad habit. He was the headline we couldn't run enough.

Sure, readers devoured the jokes and think pieces. But if he wins, we're going to have to lie in the bed we helped make. And it's going to be prickly as hell.

We're all going to get the Megyn Kelly treatment, and already are. During last night's primary victory speech, amid jeers from the crowd, Trump accused the media of "lies, deceit, viciousness, disgusting reporters, horrible people." Not only will Trump call us names, restrict our access, and generally infringe on our ability to do our job — but his supporters will love him for it.

And we're going to feel a lot like Republican leaders: sheepish that we didn't see it coming, this toppling from our pedestal, this hollowing-out of respect. Because the media, in the eyes of Trump-lovers, Sanders-lovers, and many others, are the establishment. And we should burn right along with it.

How ironically well we've aided that message. While the New York Times has been accused of being the mouthpiece for Hillary Clinton's campaign, and Fox News for Marco Rubio's, every American media outlet and many international ones have combined to become Trump's megaphone. We couldn't have done any better if he paid us. When the Times measured Trump's paid advertising versus free media coverage this week, his lead was gargantuan: nearly $1.9 billion worth of free media. Clinton was second, with less than half that. The best of the others had less than a quarter.

Yes, I'm adding to the total. But then again, Trump can't be ignored. And if Canadians think we're immune from the forces propelling his candidacy, we should think again. Many mainstream media skeptics reside north of the border. We, too, have income inequality and racism. We, too, are witnessing dramatic social and economic change. And we have our own corporate reality-TV star (Kevin O'Leary) waiting in the wings to pet egos and dull intellect.

No, we're not the U.S. But populism is also rising in Europe. Why not here? A popular meme calls Trump "what would happen if the comments section became a human and ran for president."

Read the comments sections on Canadian sites, and tell me that joke doesn't land.

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Memoir out of Antarctica

TORSTEN BLACKWOOD/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

WRITER-IN-RESIDENCE

Author reveals reality of life of isolation on ice continent

Sue Carter
For Metro Canada

The closest most of us will ever get to Antarctica is watching nature documentaries or animated films starring dancing penguins. For those willing to hand over the cash, there are cruises that offer "drive-by" views of its icebergs and seal colonies, but few have actually set foot on the world's coldest, southern-most continent, let alone live there for any amount of time.

"When you go to the Antarctic you're initiated into a select society," says author Jean McNeil. "It's a little bit like being part of the NASA team; it's like you're off the planet. The rest of the world peels away while you're there."

For four months in 2005, the Nova Scotia–born author became part of that select society as a writer-in-residence with the British Antarctic Survey, working and living alongside a team of scientists. McNeil, who previously wrote a novel and poetry collection inspired by Antarctica, never intended to write a memoir about the experience, but her new book, Ice Diaries, is a welcome literary-minded addition to a category of books dominated by male explorers.

Published by ECW Press, Ice Diaries blends McNeil's journal entries with ruminations on the harsh environment and climate change, woven with a side storyline about her rough upbringing in Eastern Canada that she recounts as being filled with its own dangers and hardship. McNeil, who now lives in London and teaches creative writing at the University of East Anglia, often had to justify her presence as a novelist to the team of geologists and oceanographers. "It's hard to not to feel very useless in an environment where so many people are so capable," she says. "Everyone else there could look at each other and know what they were doing; they knew so-and-so was there to put up meteorological balloons. But with me, I had a lot of explaining to do."

As an active member of the team, McNeil expanded her scientific knowledge, developing a particular interest in glaciology. She also learned about her own limits while battling an intense sense of entrapment and paranoia, brought on not just from being geographically isolated, but from living and working in close quarters with a tightknit group of people.

"I felt very claustrophobic and confined," she says. "When you have those powerful emotional swings in one's normal life there are ways you can mitigate that. You can go for a walk in the park or see your friends or family, or go have a coffee at a Starbucks or wherever. Symbolically here, there's no escape from your emotions. I think a lot of people make a mistake in thinking that when you go to place like that, it's all about the landscape and the natural wildlife, but what it really is about is other people."

McNeil, who says she wrote the book partly on behalf of the Antarctic, knew she would have to dispel the romance of the place and be honest about the challenges she faced. "People are expected to come back and deliver 'it was the most wonderful time of my life' narrative. The writer, of course, is that person who deals in much more grey areas," she says. "The Antarctic is a very good way to get to know yourself."

Sue Carter is the editor at Quill & Quire magazine.

Author Jean McNeil adds a memoir, Ice Diaries, to her novel and poetry collection based on her experience of living as a writer-in-residence in Antarctica. CONTRIBUTED

It's like you're off the planet. The rest of the world peels away while you're there.
Jean McNeil on her time in Antarctica

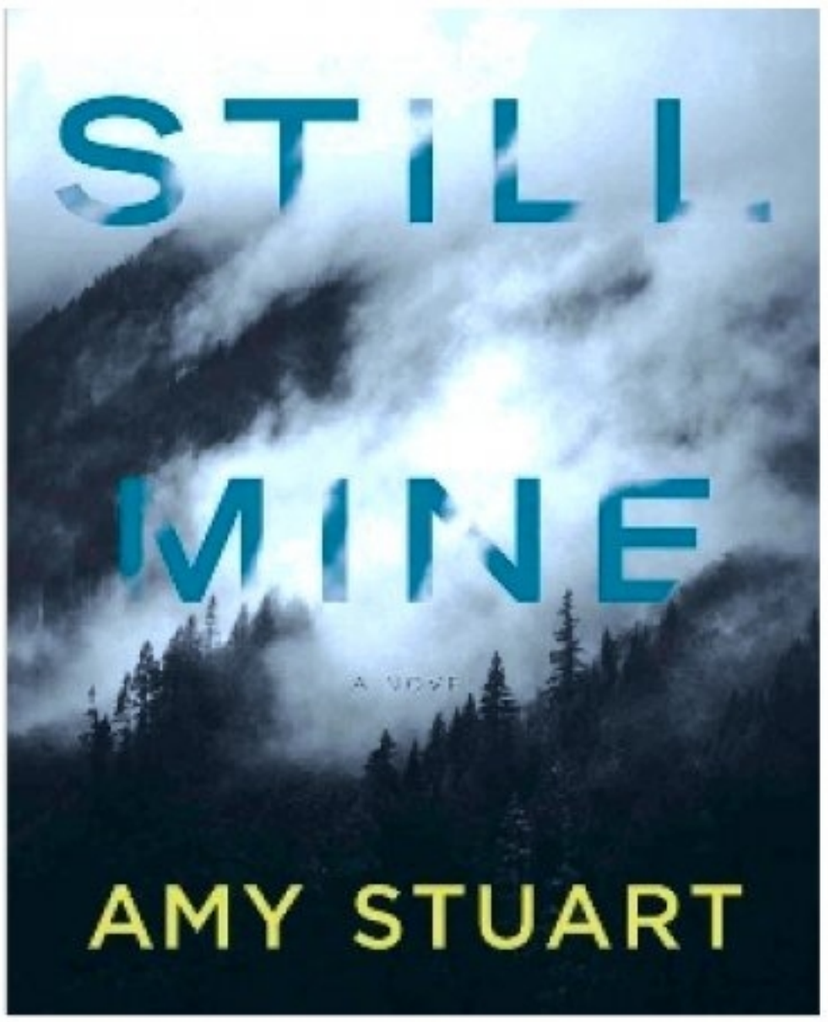
Publishers spring for next big thing

These days, the literary world looks a lot like the housing market. Publishers are doubling down on debut novelists as they hunt for the Next Big Book. This means bidding wars, auctions and astronomical advances. This way of doing business comes at a cost: novels without commercial appeal but with considerable literary merit are being ignored and left unpublished — but it also means the book market is more fascinating. Here are some of the books publishers believe in this spring, all from first-time fiction authors. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Still Mine

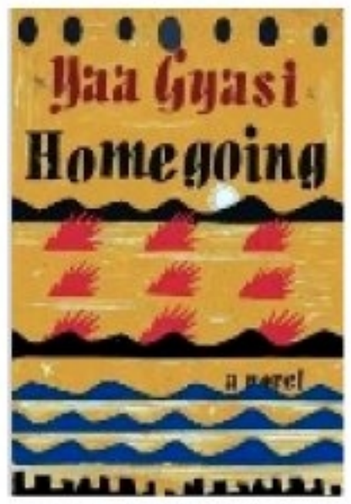
By: Amy Stuart

Six and seven-figure book deals are uncommon in Canada, but there's a success story in the works here that is seeing an author's career build in a different, and likely more sustainable, way: Torontonian Amy Stuart's debut novel Still Mine (March 1) was pitched as Top of the Lake meets The Silent Wife — and was snapped up by Simon & Schuster Canada in a two-book deal. It was recently chosen as a Costco Buyer's Pick, selected for Chatelaine's Book Club and named one of the official best books of March by Amazon.ca. All this has translated into interest from U.S. publishers, although a deal hasn't been announced yet.



Homegoing

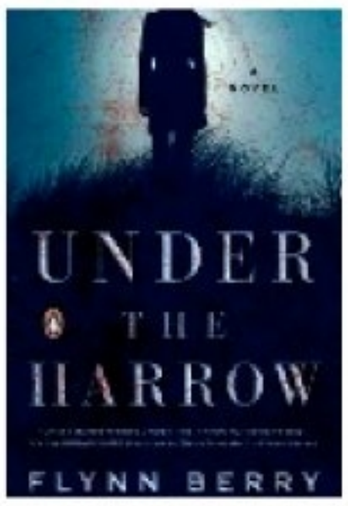
By: Yaa Gyasi



The talk of this year's London Book Fair was a novel called Homegoing (June 7) by young American/Ghanian writer Yaa Gyasi. This novel — it follows two half-sisters in 18th century Ghana, who are born in different villages and lead vastly different lives — is rumoured to have garnered seven figures when it was sold to Knopf after a ten-publisher bidding war. Knopf is banking on it being the next Goldfinch or A Little Life, and there's a great deal riding on that hope — including a young author's career. The reality of such vast advances can be dire, leaving authors with poor sales records and dim prospects if they don't over-achieve.

Under the Harrow

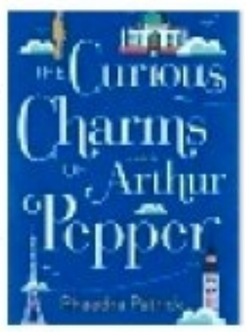
By: Flynn Berry



World rights for Flynn Berry's suspenseful — but with an upmarket literary bent — Under the Harrow (June 14) ended up with Penguin, after an auction that saw many other publishers attempting to get in on the action. Audio rights were also sold in a heated auction between three audio publishers, and this is unusual for a debut novel. The novel is set in a small English town and tells the story of a pair of sisters, one of whom is found brutally murdered, and how their past may have informed their tragic future.

The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper

By: Phaedra Patrick



Phaedra Patrick's The Curious Charms of Arthur Pepper (May 3) was bought by Mira Books in a two-book six-figure "pre-empt" — meaning the publisher made its best offer before any other publishers had the chance. The book is about a 69-year-old man who discovers a mysterious charm bracelet of his recently deceased wife and finds himself on a journey of healing.

Maestra

By: LS Hilton

Perhaps the best news out of the literary world is the search for the new EL James might be over. U.K. author LS Hilton is the alter ego of respected historian Lisa Hilton. An early draft of her sexual thriller Maestra (April 19) was met in Hollywood with a flurry of excitement — and a seven-figure deal for a movie script that is now in development. A three-book, 36-country publishing deal with Putnam was also arranged.

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5 CARTOONISTS THAT GRAPHIC ARTISTS TODAY DRAW ON

Cartoons are being used more and more as a means for social satire or to tell more adult stories. We wanted to know which cartoonists have most influenced a new generation of graphic artists and novelists. Here's what they said:

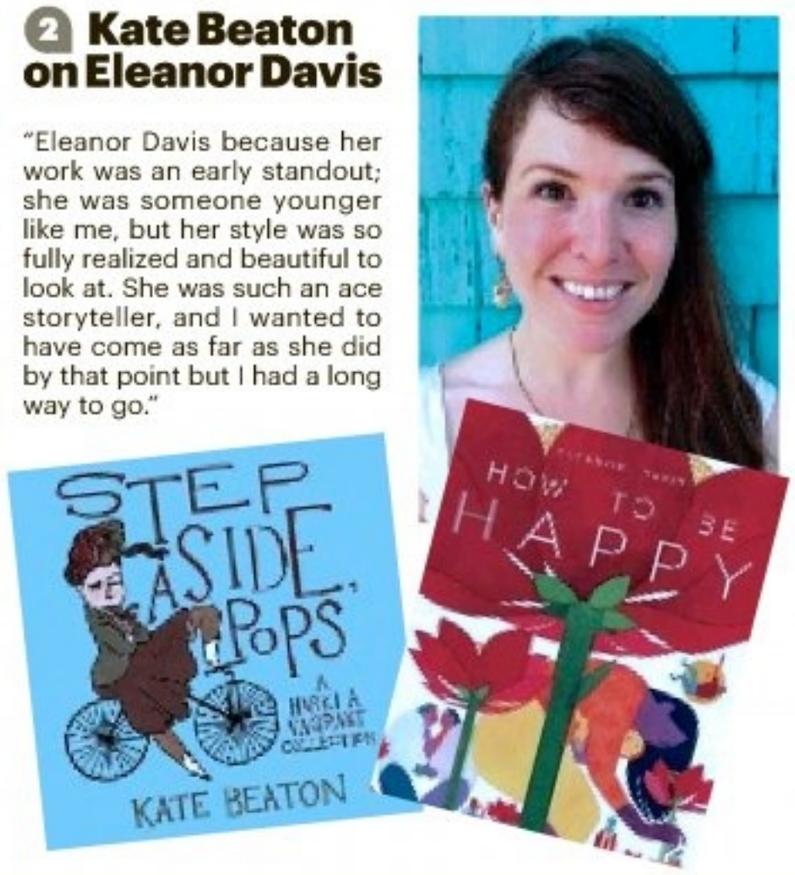
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

1 MariNaomi on Mary Fleener

"I'd been reading indie comics for a few years before I came across Mary Fleener's work in Twisted Sisters: A Collection of Bad Girl Art. Her story The Jelly, about her hot-mess of a roommate, made me laugh and cringe and think, "Hey, I've got stories like that, too!" Next thing I knew, I was making my first comic. It's been 19 years and this fun thing has somehow become What I Do. Thanks."

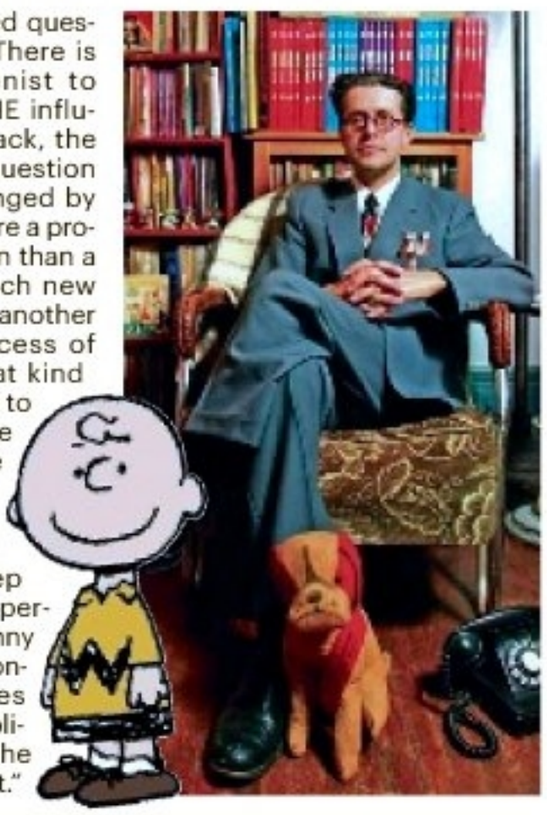
2 Kate Beaton on Eleanor Davis

"Eleanor Davis because her work was an early standout; she was someone younger like me, but her style was so fully realized and beautiful to look at. She was such an ace storyteller, and I wanted to have come as far as she did by that point but I had a long way to go."



3 Seth on Charles Schulz

"It's a complicated question to answer. There is no ONE cartoonist to be chosen as THE influence. Looking back, the answer to that question would have changed by the decade — more a process of inspiration than a single figure. Each new figure providing another step in the process of figuring out what kind of artist I wished to be ... Certainly the primary influence would be Charles Schulz. Fifty years of integrity in his work. Deep work. Profound, personal and yet funny and accessible; confident clean lines and elegant simplicity of design. The Master Cartoonist."



4 Georgia Webber on Bill Watterson

"Deeply, emphatically, unequivocally: Bill Watterson. In all the ways that one's work can be influenced — aesthetically, politically, emotionally, colour, storytelling, text — it's Watterson's approach to his art, his conviction about it, that is my guiding star. He worked for passion, yes, and for fun, that too, but also for the betterment of this world and the chosen medium of his efforts. Calvin and Hobbes is so whole, so bittersweet, and so much greater than the sum of its parts. While my work is entirely different in almost every way, Watterson showed me how to bring my heart to it."

5 Teva Harrison on Art Spiegelman

"As long as I can remember, Art Spiegelman's art has been there. From my collection of Garbage Pail Kids cards in elementary school to my first awareness of graphic memoir, Spiegleman showed me the diversity of possibility for comic arts. When the Art Gallery of Ontario showed his work, I visited over and over to study his lines and the way he breaks frame. His candour, experimentation and unconventional approach to the page continue to inspire me."

NOIR COMICS

Steeljack, the shiny gumshoe, is back

Mike Donachie
Metro | Canada

ASTRO CITY #33
BY: Kurt Busiek, Brent Eric Anderson and Alex Ross
PUBLISHER: DC/Vertigo

One of the most compelling characters in comics has made a quiet return, and that's appropriate. He's the quiet type.

Steeljack, aka the Steeljacketed Man, aka Carl Donewicz, is the down-at-heel former supervillain who haunts the back streets of Astro City as a tatty, yet shiny, gumshoe trying to help the little guy.

His debut adventure, The Tarnished Angel, is widely available in collected form, and highly recommended for anyone who loves a hopeless underdog. Steeljack, whose look was based on Robert Mitchum if he'd been coated in metal, returned to the monthly Astro City book in #32, which you can still find easily, and the second part of the story is out this week.

As is traditional in the noir genre, the case starts with a "dame" walking into the detective's office. Steeljack's old flame Cutlass wants to clear her name, and he's already regretting agreeing to help.

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Vaughan Mills
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Woodbine Centre
Yorkdale Mall

Finding humour in her depression

REVIEW

How Melissa Broder turned Twitter feed into book deal

"I've been awake 7 minutes and it's already too much," reads a tweet from @SoSadToday.

Melissa Broder started the anonymous Twitter account while working in publicity at Penguin Random House as a place to exercise dark humour and attempt to empty out her anxious thoughts.

As her followers grew into the hundreds of thousands, including celebrity names such as Katy Perry, it snowballed into a column for VICE.

At VICE, Broder still wrote anonymously, experimenting with essays, advice and interviews with porn professionals. Broder, a published poet in her early 30s, kept her name off her work until last year when she secured a book deal based on the concept.

So Sad Today is an extension of Broder's Twitter account, with 18 personal essays touching religion, addiction, extramarital affairs, counting calories and Botox.

The book is intimate, unfiltered and painfully honest — for instance, there's an entire chapter on her vomit fetish. Broder told Rolling Stone she dictated most of the book to Siri while driving around Los Angeles, which explains why it reads like a stream of consciousness rather than something carefully and deliberately constructed.

The advantage of this form is it gives reader a raw portrayal of how Broder experiences depression and anxiety — how she manages suicidal thoughts, found the right mix of medication and her reasons behind meditation.

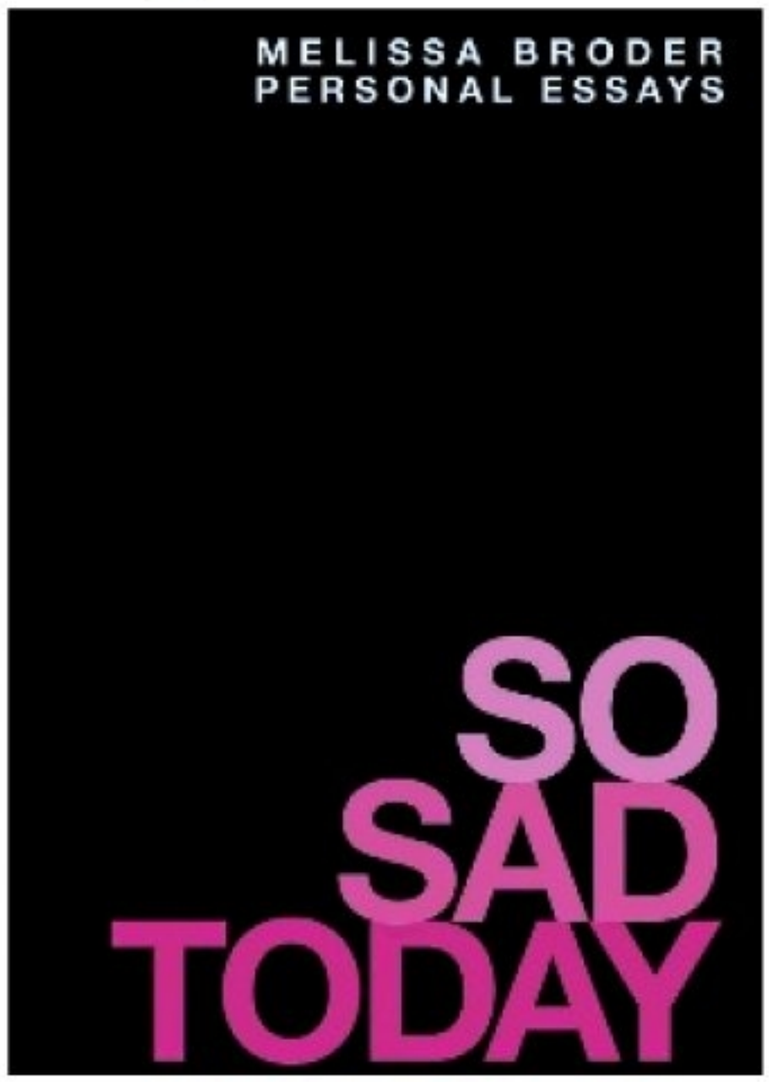
"The ocean gives me performance anxiety about being at peace
Melissa Broder

She communicates what a big part of her life her illness is while remaining able to see humour in it. "The ocean gives me performance anxiety about being at peace," she writes.

Although she writes that she's constantly fretting about what people think about her, Broder is still open (and funny) when addressing her shortcomings — ranging from her struggles with addiction to romance: "I've been romantically obsessed with so many people that I've kind of become a getting-over-the-fantasy-of-people athlete."

But this immersion into Broder's thoughts can also feel like an unedited Internet diary, one that many may roll their eyes at as a quintessentially millennial form — self-absorbed, devoting a chapter to a sexting exchange.

If you're looking for a deep, thoughtful memoir addressing mental illness, this may not be the book for you. If you're looking for a window into one woman's experience with this illness in an age where someone is always watching, it's worth a try. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



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Does Heather really choose her picks?

INTERVIEW

The story behind the Indigo seal of approval

Just as Martha or Gwyneth trigger a pang of underachievement in domestic doyennes, Heather Reisman is an intimidating figure for book lovers. She's the founder and CEO of Indigo, Canada's leading "cultural department store" and she still has time to polish off Jonathan Franzen's latest doorstop. What's your excuse?

Since 1998, she's been the face of 262 Heather's Picks, the Oprah-esque seal (or sticker) of approval that comes with a money-back guarantee and has emerged as a reliable sales driver. "Almost all Heather's books end up selling quite well," she says, sitting in a chair in her in-office sitting area, bowls of fresh oranges and almonds on the coffee table.

In the lap of her black-pleated skirt is the next Heather's Pick. The Nest, the debut novel by American writer Cynthia D'Aprix Sweeney, is a family saga about siblings who clash over an inheritance. HarperCollins' Ecco imprint bought it in a seven-figure deal in December 2014.

In a rare intersection of Indigo endorsements, The Nest, out March 22, has been named both a Heather's Pick and a Staff Pick which, since 2012, has been chosen by a revolving panel of Indigo employees from stores and head office. The only previous novels to receive both blessings were 2014's All The Light We Cannot See, which went on to win the Pulitzer Prize, and last year's The Girl On The Train.

"(The Nest) came to me from our internal print team in a very early ARC (advance reader copy)," she says. "It was with 10 other books that they brought to me. I loved the (turquoise) colour. It had a beautiful cover. Literally halfway through the first paragraph I was already into it."

Most Heather's Picks grab her from the first page. If she isn't hooked after 20 pages, she's done.

"Literally 20 pages, " she says.

Reisman is constantly playing defence against the perception that she is as much reading Heather's Picks as J. Lo is whipping up Miami Glo in her bathtub.

Indigo CEO Heather Reisman says she really does pick all of her Heather's Picks. "I am so careful. ... it only has to be something that I love like crazy." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

"I get asked all the time, do you really pick your Heather's Picks?" she says.

"And it makes me smile because I am so careful about what becomes a Heather's Pick and it only has to be something that I love like crazy."

She tries to read a book a week. "Sometimes it doesn't happen, " she says. "I'm like everybody else. If two weeks go by and I haven't read, I get out of the habit. I usually start reading a book on the weekend. If it's really good I'll finish it."

There's no schedule to Heather's Picks. "Sometimes I read 10 things or 12 things or 15 things and . . . they're good!" she says. "I'm glad I read them. But not a Pick. And then I'll read something and from the second I get started I love it. And then I do what I've done for my whole life, and I tell all the people that I care about that I love it."

One of her cardinal reading rules — no devices. "I take my iPad and my iPhone and I put them in another room, " she says. She reads everywhere, including aloud to her husband of more than 30 years, Gerry Schwartz, as he does to her, though she admits she's the faster reader. "The only place I don't read, interestingly enough, I don't read in bed, because I would fall asleep," she says.

> **"The only time I will read in bed is if I have a Sunday morning with nothing to do**
> Heather Reisman

"The only time I will read in bed is if I have a Sunday morning with nothing to do. The sun is shining in through the windows and I know I have the whole Sunday ahead of me and nowhere to go."

The image, as with everything Heather, is a true book lover's fantasy.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Falling for runway looks

FASHION WEEK

Models slipped up on the catwalk due to wet weather

The traditional runway walk proved treacherous at the kickoff of Toronto Fashion Week, with several models in the Mikhael Kale show slipping on the slickened surface.

"Unfortunately, the one thing we can't control is the weather," Carolyn Quinn, director of IMG Fashion Events & Properties, said in an emailed statement.

"The rain tracked inside made the runway slippery, but Mikhael Kale presented a beautiful collection and we've remedied the issue."

Models taking part in shows Tuesday were still exercising caution.

Dane Carlsen said he makes a conscious decision to slow down before turning on the Toronto runway, and averted a potential slip during the Bustle show.

"As soon as I walked out, the bottom of the shoes are taped, so, when I stopped to turn at the very beginning, I did a little two-inch slide. ... It's the floor."

Models typically rehearse for presentations on the runway well before showtime. But even the most experienced among them can be thrown for a loop as they ready for their entrance, due in part to a common catwalk issue: ill-fitting footwear.

"Heels that don't fit, it's a normal thing backstage," said Amanda Laine, who has modelled for eight years.

"They always have padding for us, or double-stick tape taping your foot to the shoe. That's just something you learn to deal with."

Laine said she started modelling at age 16, and that it's become "second nature" to walk in heels on the runway. While she's never taken a tumble during a show, she's had to contend with some unexpected on-the-job challenges, recalling a Louis Vuitton show requiring models to ascend a hill and round a corner.

"The best thing is not to freak out and just go with the flow," Laine said. "There are things that happen, and there are sometimes girls that fall and trip; but you kind of just need to realize it'll happen in life."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

A model slips during the Mikhael Kale show at Fashion Week in Toronto on Monday. MARK BLINCH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

OUTERWEAR OR STATEMENT WEAR

Ditch your down fill: Montreal designer craves return to coats for every occasion

Marisa Minicucci believes it's time for coats to be the focal point of the wardrobe.

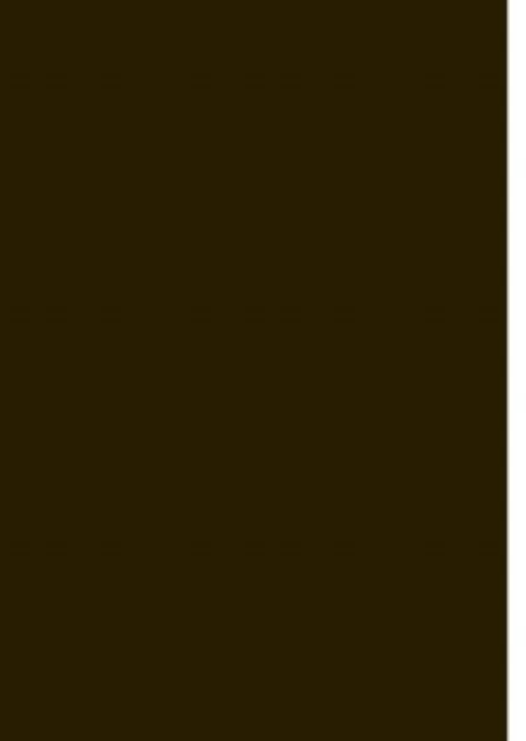
"It's the piece that every woman should really think (about) and re-evaluate, and make it the statement piece," said the veteran Montreal-based designer, with more than three decades of industry experience.

"The puffer (coat) is great and there's beautiful ones out there, but now it's time to return to a coat for every occasion."

Minicucci is the lead designer of new outerwear label Sosken Studios. Sosken is the Norwegian word for "sister."

With a glowing neon sign bearing the label's name at the entry to the runway, and miniature lights lining the walkway, Sosken unveiled a vast range of outerwear offerings each etched with distinctive details.

Coats were adorned with everything from epaulettes to houndstooth sleeves, with a rich assortment of colours and patterns for all tastes, including creamy neutrals and more richly-hued shades. THE CANADIAN PRESS



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JOHANNA SCHNELLER WHAT I'M WATCHING

Maternal manipulation

THE SHOW: House of Cards, Season 4, Episode 10 (Netflix)
THE MOMENT: The Deathbed

In the cynical world of House of Cards, Claire Underwood (Robin Wright, left) may stand to benefit from the sympathy vote if her mother, Elizabeth (Ellen Burstyn, right), passes away before the election. CONTRIBUTED

Claire Underwood (Robin Wright), who's running for U.S. vice-president, is talking to her mother Elizabeth (Ellen Burstyn), who wants Claire to hasten her imminent death.

"When you were small, you would sit at that window every night, trying to make the sun rise all by yourself," Elizabeth says. "Your daddy would put you in bed after you'd fallen asleep with your face against the glass. I was so jealous."

"Of me and daddy?" Claire asks.

"That you believed you could make the sun rise," Elizabeth answers.

"I can't do it, Mother," Claire says. "I can't do what you want me to do."

"Claire," Elizabeth says flatly. "It would help you win."

I was relieved when this scene came along, because I was losing patience with this season, and this show. It's at once too cynical (there is not one decent soul in all of government) and too silly (a husband and wife running for president and VP? Come on).

House of Cards' strength, however, is scenes like the one above: the dramatization of how easily people are manipulated, even (or especially) if the end result is not in their best interests.

Its writers couldn't have anticipated the absurdist reality show that is Donald Trump. But both point up the risk of democracy. A vote is a vote, no matter how under-educated, narrow-minded or loopily sentimental the voter.

As threatening as Frank Underwood (Kevin Spacey) tries to be, there is nothing more dangerous than a citizen with his/her hand on the wrong lever.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

Series tackle chemical warfare

IN LOVE AND WAR

Shows tackle consequences and personal involvement

In Season 4, The Americans' Matthew Rhys and Keri Russell are tasked with stealing pathogens. CONTRIBUTED

Despite being set in the 1980s, the spy drama The Americans has a reputation for storylines that shed light on present-day situations.

Starring Matthew Rhys and Keri Russell as expertly trained KGB spies posing as happily married parents, the fourth season, which premiered Wednesday on FX Canada, centres on the all-too-real present-day threats of biological and chemical warfare, thanks to the addition of cast member Dylan Baker. The Good Wife actor plays William, a scientist and defector with enough clout to get his hands on lethal biological ammunition for Mother Russia.

Americans creator Joe Weisberg, head writer on the series, said the idea for this storyline came after they learned that the Soviets had spent decades building what he called a "tremendous amount of biological weapons in the event there was a nuclear exchange. They wanted a second set of weapons in case their nuclear weapons got wiped out.

"Because there have been so many movies and TV shows that have dealt with this topic, that made it very appealing to us because we love to subvert the genre," Weisberg said.

"How do we do a version of it that is our spies, whom we care about, living in suburban Virginia and having to deal with the frightening aspects but also the moral aspects of having to steal certain pathogens? How does that filter in our lives?"

Biological and chemical warfare have routinely infiltrated entertainment programming just as they are lead newspaper headlines and TV newsmagazine reports. They've popped up in series as diverse as The 100 and Blindspot.

Upcoming series Containment, which will soon air on Global, deals with the aftermath of a viral outbreak started under mysterious, possibly terrorism-related, circumstances. (And, the U.S. Marine Corps' supposed use of sarin was a catalyst for another story in the second season of The Newsroom in 2013).

But biological and chemical weapons stories lend themselves especially well to the espionage genre. The most recent season of Homeland featured a character tortured with sarin gas as well as a plot to leak the same substance through a Berlin subway station.

In April, AMC will premiere The Night Manager, a co-production with the BBC that is currently airing in the U.K. The series is an update of the 1993 John le Carré novel, featuring Hugh Laurie's Richard Onslow Roper — also described as "the worst man in the world" — as a black market dealer of arms and chemical weaponry. Meanwhile, his public persona is that of a self-made philanthropist who runs refugee camps and delivers TED-style talks. Tom Hiddleston also stars as Jonathan Pine, an agent working to bring down Roper.

AMC declined to comment for this story, but Laurie addressed the idea of showing the behind-the-scenes mechanics of arms deals (and the megalomaniacs who profiteer from them) during The Night Manager's Television Critics Association press day in January in Pasadena, Calif.

"The violence that he does, the violence that he brings to the world and profits from, may as well (be) psychotic," Laurie said of Roper, adding, "It's not good for one's sanity, I think, to be able to operate unopposed, and this is a man who has created a world for himself where he can operate unopposed, unchallenged."

With The Americans, the situation is less glamorous.

"The whole trope of the spy genre is how exciting it is to be a spy; you want to be James Bond. And the whole concept of this show is how awful it is to be a spy because spies are soldiers," said executive producer Fields.

"You can make a war film that makes war seem heroic, but you talk to anybody who's actually been on the front line, and they can believe completely in the justification of their cause and the righteousness of their battle, but nobody wants to be at war."

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YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

Your daily crossword and Sudoku answers from the play page.

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9	1	8	3	6	5	4	2	7
3	2	6	7	4	8	5	1	9
1	3	9	5	8	4	2	7	6
4	7	2	6	3	1	9	5	8
6	8	5	9	2	7	3	4	1
8	6	1	4	5	3	7	9	2
7	5	3	1	9	2	8	6	4
2	9	4	8	7	6	1	3	5

metro HOME

Your essential daily news

Screen designed by Kimu showcased at Maison & Objet Asia

A rendering of the new Yorkville Village shopping mall at Avenue Road and Yorkville, the re-imagined Hazelton Lanes. Below: The Cumberland Tower. Yorkville is going through a transformation period again. MAIN: KASIAN ARCHITECTURE; SECONDARY: CAMROST-FELCORP

You've come a long way Yorkville

CONDO TRENDS

Lux shopping mecca transforms once again

Duncan McAllister
For Metro Canad

Originally a low-rent corner of Toronto's downtown, Yorkville's rows of artists' studios and coffee houses became a Mecca for Canada's thriving 1960s counter-cultural revolution, once frequented by the likes of Joni Mitchell and Neil Young.

Things didn't start to happen until the 1950s when the Bloor subway line went in.

Major changes began to take place a decade later when the eclectic little village north of Bloor Street went from beat-generation to the Mink Mile.

Yorkville has long been Canada's most celebrated luxury shopping and culture district, home to the city's finest shops, cafés, restaurants and hotels, with such celebrated names as Holt Renfrew, Louis Viton, Prada, Chanel, Gucci and Cartier.

Today, Toronto's venerable Yorkville neighbourhood is undergoing a major facelift, that started a few years ago with the transformation of the Four Seasons Hotel. Developer Camrost-Felcorp has converted the 31-storey hotel built in 1971, into luxury condominiums.

Toronto's venerable Yorkville neighbourhood is undergoing a major facelift, that started a few years ago with the transformation of the Four Seasons Hotel.

With the new Four Seasons Hotel now in operation at the heart of Yorkville, the former location has been converted into The Residences of Yorkville Plaza, a condominium that incorporates much of the original building's architecture. The next phase is Yorkville Plaza II, the Cumberland Tower, a 40-storey building designed by WZMH Architects.

The Minto group has recently launched a new residential address in Yorkville for the third time. Rising 25 storeys, the upper suites of Minto Yorkville Park will have wide city views while the boutique units on lower floors will overlook the Village of Yorkville Park.

Located in the centre of The Village at the intersection of Bellair and Cumberland, Yorkville Park condos boasts a walk score of 100, being steps from the Bay subway station and nearby Yonge station.

The new Yorkville Village shopping mall at Avenue Road and Yorkville is the re-imagined redux of the 38-year-old Hazelton Lanes.

"The Lanes" was once Canada's premiere high-end fashion locale, that fell into disrepair as a result of the 1990s recession.

First Realty Capital purchased the property with the goal of transforming the '70s-era landmark into a new, $100 million "neighbourhood centre."

The major anchor tenants include a new Equinox Fitness centre that opened this year and a Whole Foods Market. When complete, the premier shopping destination will feature an oval-shaped centre atrium. A dramatic glass façade along Yorkville Avenue will flood the concourse with natural light. The refresh will include more retail space and modern finishes.

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MEET THE CONDO

Flat Iron style

Project overview

4 The Kingsway is a new boutique condominium located at the apex of the Kingsway and Bloor Street West. The architecturally eye-catching Flat Iron style building is a landmark residential development at the eastern gateway of the Kingsway community.

Housing amenities

Residents can enjoy an open terrace for entertaining and a private gym. Units will offer open main rooms, dens, libraries and five piece en suites. Each home comes with parking and Wolf and Sub-Zero appliances.

In the neighbourhood

Both the Bloor West Village and the Kingsway Village are nearby, offering convenient access to some excellent neighbourhood restaurants, cafes and shopping. The development sits above the Humber River and King's Mill park.

Location and transit

The site sits beside a park where the Kingsway and Bloor Street West intersect, steps away from the Old Mill TTC subway station. It's a quick drive to the Gardiner Expressway. Commuters can be downtown within 45 minutes.

DUNCAN MCALLISTER/FOR METRO

NEED TO KNOW

What: 4 The Kingsway
Builder: North Drive
Interiors: Brian Gluckstein
Architect: Richard Wengle
Location: 4 The Kingsway
Building: An eight-storey midrise with 30 suites and five townhouses.
Sizes: From 1,291 to over 3,000 square feet.
Pricing: From $1.2-million to over $3-million
Model: One bedroom plus den to two bedroom plus den and library.
Status: Pre-construction, registration phase
Occupancy: Fall 2017
Sales centre: Launching in Spring of 2016
Hours: Sales by appointment
Phone: 416-236-2992
Website: 4thekingsway.com
Email: info@4thekingsway.com

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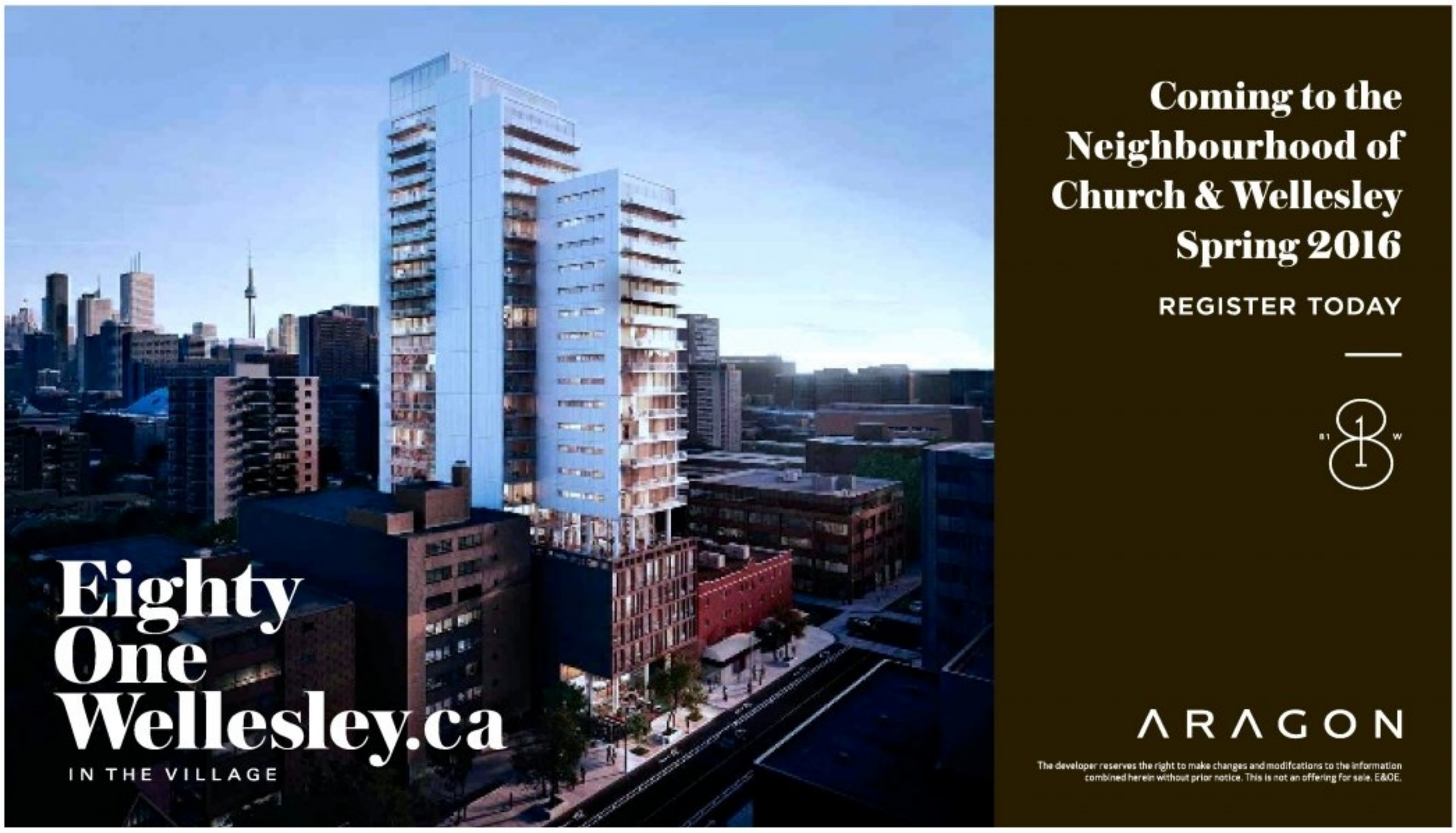
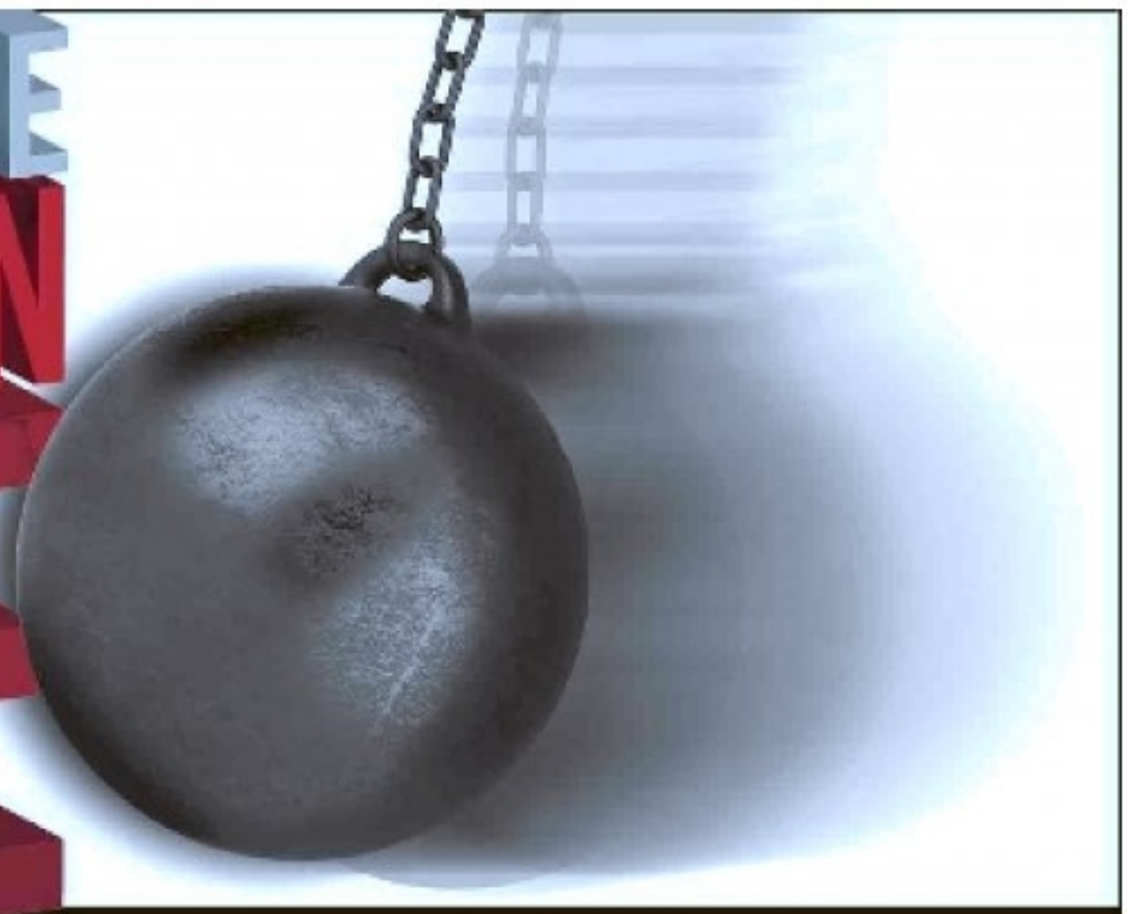


MINTO WESTSIDE DEMOLITION SALE



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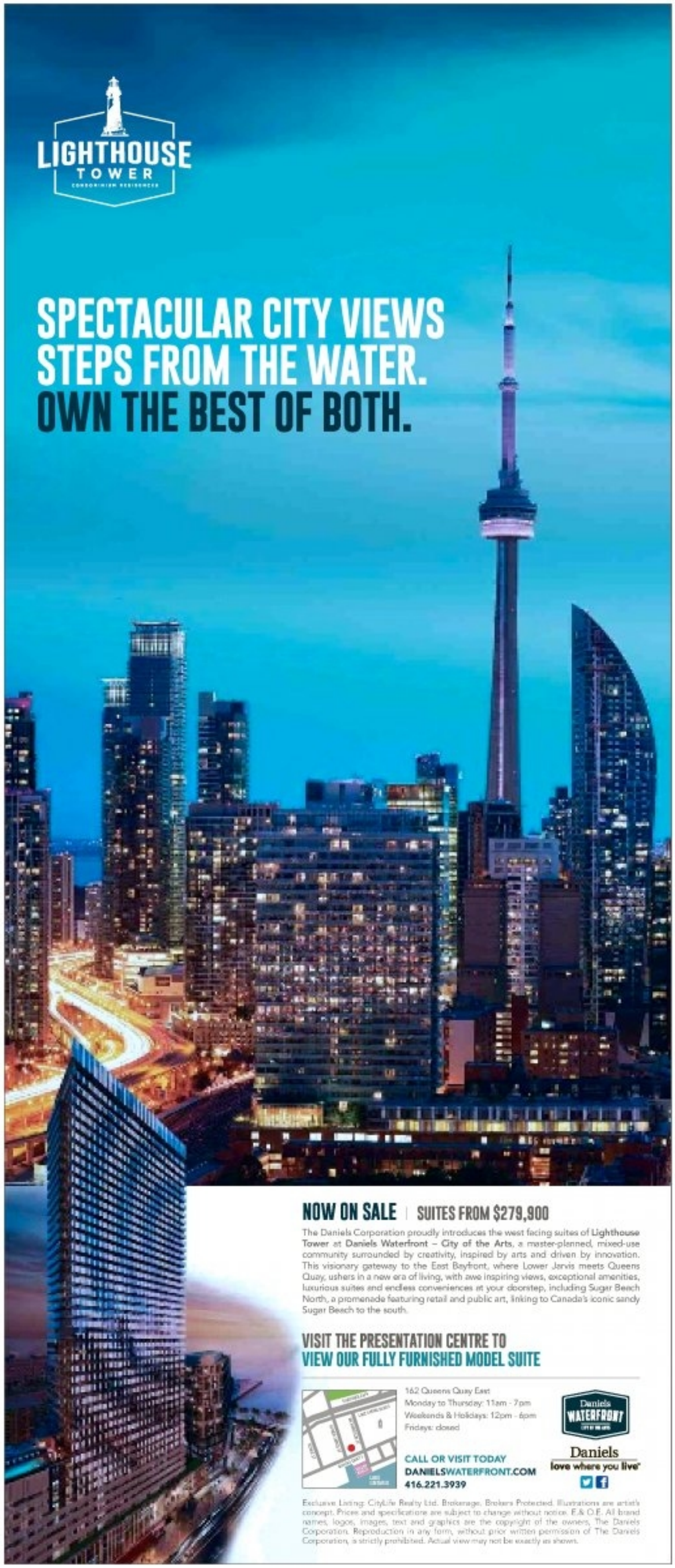

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Parkdale: A charming Victorian detached home in Parkdale will be shown this weekend. Check it out at 101 O'Hara Ave., on March 19 and 20 from 2 to 4 p.m. CONTACT: TRACEY LOGAN, RE/MAX WEST REALTY INC., BROKERAGE, 416-769-1616

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Getting a permit can be a complicated process that you may want to leave up to the professionals. ISTOCK

When do you need a permit?

BILD

Getting a permit can take weeks or even months

Bryan Tuckey
For Metro Canada

So you've decided to renovate.

A home renovation is a great way to increase the value, not to mention your enjoyment of your home.

Calculating your budget and finding a renovator are both important considerations when thinking about a home renovation, but another key component not to be overlooked is understanding whether or not you will need a building permit.

Building permits are granted by municipalities and are considered a formal permission for the construction, demolition or alteration of a home. Each municipality has its own set of regulations but most major renovations, such as those where structural walls or plumbing components are altered, require building permits.

Permits must be obtained before you begin renovating. Failure to do so may result in a fine of up to $50,000 for a first offence and up to $100,000 for subsequent offenses.

Getting a building permit is a complicated process.

It can take several weeks or even months to obtain and if it seems overwhelming, the best thing to do is to contact a professional renovator who has experience with permit applications.

There are a number of online resources to find professional renovators, such as the national RenoMark program.

It can be accessed by visiting renomark.ca, which features a searchable database of professional renovators, trade contractors and custom builders.

A professional renovator will be able to assess your project and explain whether or not a permit is needed, and what it will take to obtain one.

Keep in mind that some renovations require the help of a service professional like an architect, structural engineer or electrician.

Many renovators have existing relationships with trade professionals.

Your renovator is the project manager to bring in the right people, get the necessary drawings and submit the application to the municipality on your behalf.

This is the most efficient way to obtain the permit. Just make sure that the cost is discussed up front and factored into the contract.

Talk to your renovator throughout the process.

It's important to keep the lines of communication open at all times.

Your renovator is your partner in realizing your dream of a newly renovated home so it's important to work with someone you can trust.

BRYAN TUCKEY IS PRESIDENT AND CEO OF THE BUILDING INDUSTRY AND LAND DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION AND A LAND-USE PLANNER WHO HAS WORKED FOR MUNICIPAL, REGIONAL AND PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS. FOLLOW HIM ON TWITTER @BILDGTA, FACEBOOK.COM/BILDGTA, AND BILDBLOGS.CA.

ADVICE

Signing out of province not straightforward

Jeffrey Cowan
For Metro Canada

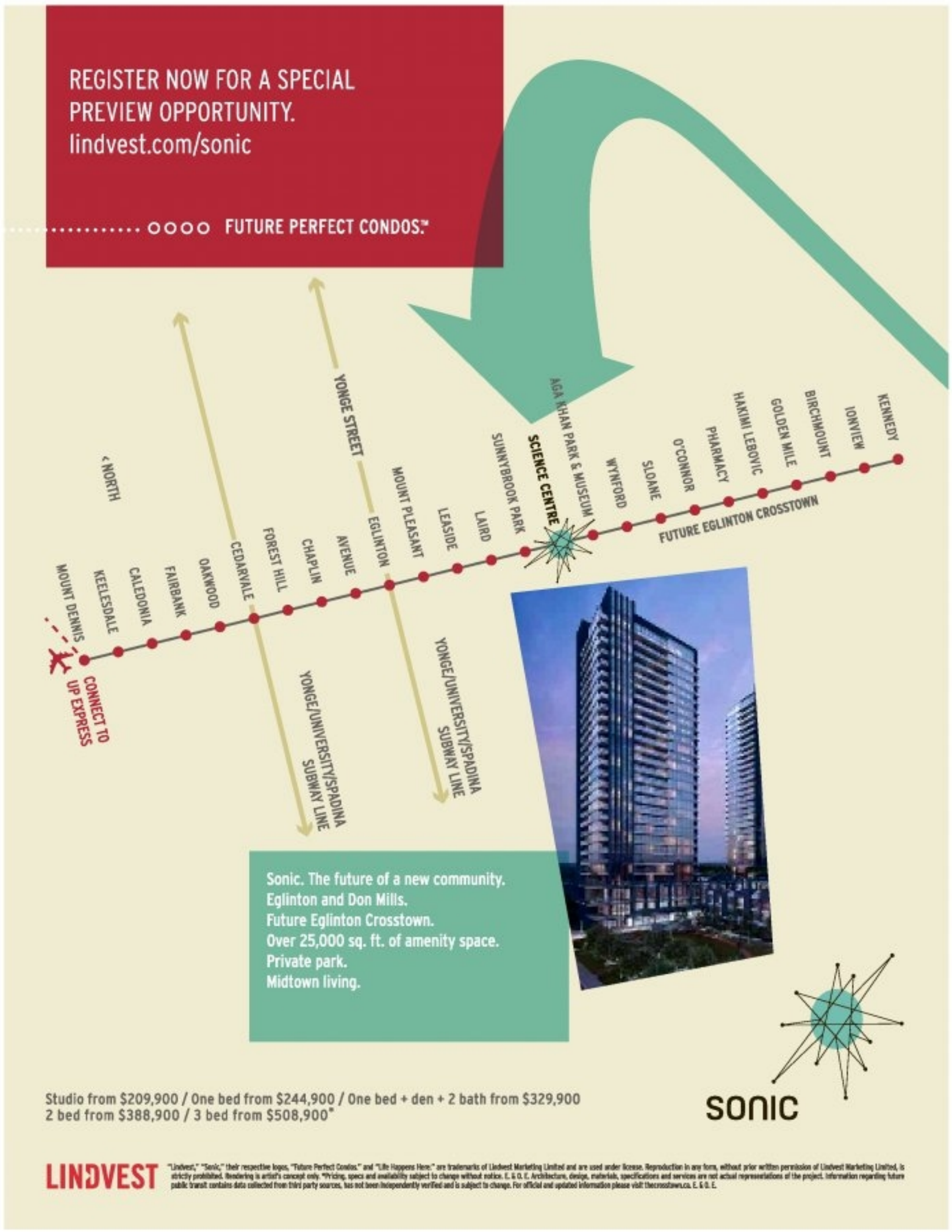
Q: My husband and I are refinancing our home with a new mortgage at a wonderfully reduced rate from when we last visited this financing, which was five year ago. We are all set to go and my husband, who is a truck driver, had to travel to the east coast to service a route for three weeks (up and down the coast). The paperwork is ready to go but my lawyer is saying it has to wait until my husband is back in town to sign the documents. We need to get this done otherwise we might be subject to penalties. My spouse has arranged to sign the documents with a lawyer in Nova Scotia but there is still some reluctance on my lawyer's part to have him sign the documents in Nova Scotia. Is my lawyer being picky or is this really an issue?

A: When you visit your lawyer to sign any banking documents with respect to your home, there is something subtle going on behind the scenes.

Your lawyer is also acting on behalf of the bank and assuring the bank that he/she has provided advice to you as a client with respect to your rights and obligations under the mortgage. Lawyers are licensed provincially so technically, a lawyer licensed to practice in Nova Scotia should not be giving advice with respect to an Ontario mortgage.

Often times this nuance is overlooked and the documents are signed out of province. However, the bank will be concerned about having had the documents signed in Nova Scotia if the mortgage goes into default and they have to enforce their financial rights.

Just as with many things in life, it is not straightforward. Your husband may have to come home to sign the documents.



metro SPORTS

Canada's Milos Raonic advanced to the quarter-finals of the BNP Paribas Open with a 6-4, 7-6 win over Tomas Berdych

GMs take a look but leave lottery to luck

NHL

No appetite to change draft order system as Oilers thrive

The Edmonton Oilers are just two points ahead of the last-place Toronto Maple Leafs entering action Wednesday and stand a fair chance of landing the first overall pick for the fifth time in seven years.

But evidently there's no appetite amongst the league's GMs to tweak the rules regarding the draft lottery.

"There was no sentiment to make a change right now," NHL commissioner Gary Bettman said following the third and final day of the GM's meetings.

The NHL shifted the lottery system two years ago, implementing changes that lowered the odds of lottery success for the league's worst teams. The process this year will see three lotteries performed for the top three picks.

"There's no incentive to lose now," said Ottawa Senators general manager Bryan Murray. "They're used to be.

"Now the odds are not necessarily in your favour. You get (a) 20 per cent chance. The Toronto Maple Leafs, if they happen to be the (last-place) team, they have 20 per cent chance only. I think anybody that questions it now is wrong."

Auston Matthews is widely expected to be first pick in the 2016 draft. RONI REKOMAA/GETTY IMAGES

Some general managers, including St. Louis's Doug Armstrong, expressed interest in devising a rule that prevented teams not last in the standings from winning the draft lottery multiple times in a short period.

"The theory is that if you finish last you always have a chance to win the lottery," Armstrong said. "But if you didn't finish last and win the lottery, you can't do it again for another five years."

That would have limited future scenarios such as the one that saw the Oilers, third-last overall last season, land the top prize in Connor McDavid in 2015 after picking first in 2010, 2011, and 2012.

The plan seemingly didn't gather much support. That could change, though, if Edmonton happens to land the first overall pick again this year with another prize in Auston Matthews available.

"Things like that happen when you have a lottery," Bettman concluded.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NO CTE MOVE

The NHL won't comment on an NFL executive's recent acknowledgment the brain disease CTE can be linked to football because it's not "necessary or appropriate". When asked at the GMs meeting to comment, Gary Bettman stuck to his position that the league isn't going to get into a public debate.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE ROUNDUP

Bayern win thriller as Barca march on

Thomas Mueller equalized in the first minute of injury time and Bayern Munich scored two more goals in extra time to complete a thrilling 4-2 victory over Juventus on Wednesday that sent the German powerhouse into the Champions League quarter-finals.

Thiago Alcantara scored in the 108th minute to put Bayern ahead for good in the second-leg match of the last 16 and Kingsley Coman, on loan from Juventus, added the hosts' fourth goal just two minutes later to seal a 6-4 victory on aggregate. Bayern trailed 2-0 after goals from Juve's Paul Pogba and Juan Cuadrado. The home side looked to be out until Robert Lewandowski scored in the 73rd and Mueller's late header changed everything.

In the other match Wednesday, Barcelona's beat Arsenal 3-1 (5-1 on agg.), sending the defending champions into the quarterfinals for a ninth consecutive season. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bayern's Robert Lewandowski, 2nd right, celebrates his side's first goal against Juventus. KERSTIN JOENSSON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

SOCCER

15-year-old called up to Canada's U-20s

With an eye to the future, Canadian under-20 soccer coach Rob Gale has called up 15-year-old midfielder Alphonso Davies for an eight-day camp in England.

Davies became the youngest signing in the United Soccer League's history when, aged 15 years and three months and three weeks, he became a member of Vancouver Whitecaps FC 2 in February. Previously with the Edmonton Strikers, he joined the Whitecaps' under-16 residency program last summer.

The Liberian-born midfielder has already been called up by the Canadian under-15 team. He was due to join an under-17 camp in February but was with the Whitecaps in training camp, seeing action in several MLS preseason games.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Hutchison hit and miss in Jays defeat

BASEBALL

Pitcher gives up key homer as Yankees win 2-1

Drew Hutchison's bid to nail down the fifth starter's spot in the Blue Jays rotation goes on after he failed to fully convince in a 2-1 loss to the New York Yankees Wednesday night.

Hutchison looked sharp early on, striking out three. He left the game having allowed two runs and four hits in 4-2/3 innings of work in his quest to reclaim a starting role.

He gave up a two-run homer to Starlin Castro and that was enough as the Yanks came out on top.

Roeman Fields doubled to right field in the top of the 8th to score Andy Burns for the Jays' only run.

Nathan Eovaldi struck out two and walked two over two hitless innings in his second spring training appearance for the Yankees since his season was cut short after a Sept. 5 start due to right elbow inflammation.

After making comments critical of instant replay in baseball and Carolina Panthers quarterback Cam Newton, Hall of Famer Goose Gossage was not at Steinbrenner Field.

Yankees general manager Brian Cashman said Gossage was at an autograph signing and was not asked to stay away.

Gossage, a Yankees spring training instructor, criticized Blue Jays star Jose Bautista last week for his bat flip during last year's playoffs, calling him "a disgrace to the game" during an interview with ESPN.

In remarks about replay published Monday, Gossage told the New York Post: "Who's died in the last 100 years because of a bad call?"

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York Yankees first baseman Mark Teixeira reacts as he gets Toronto Blue Jays' Jose Bautista out at first base of Wednesday's game. CHRIS O'MEARA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

Former Raptor Stoudamire becomes an NCAA coach

The first-ever player drafted by the Toronto Raptors is now an NCAA head coach. Damon Stoudamire was hired Wednesday as the 22nd head men's basketball coach at Pacific.

"I am humbled and honoured to be named head men's basketball coach at University of the Pacific," said Stoudamire. "I'm truly blessed to be able to lead our Tigers into the future!"

THE CANADIAN PRESS

New Kiwi to take charge

Rugby Canada is reportedly tabbing another New Zealander to coach the men's national team. The New Zealand Herald says Mark Anscombe has been offered the job. Anscombe previously coached Ulster in the Guinness Pro 12, Auckland in the ITM Cup and the New Zealand under-20 side that won the 2011 IRB Junior World Championship.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

LeBron told to take a rest

Cavaliers star LeBron James sat out Wednesday against Dallas, part of the team's plan to rest him before the playoffs. Coach Tyronn Lue announced the decision not to play James about 90 minutes before tipoff against the Mavericks.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

COLLEGE BASKETBALL

Canucks to watch amid the Madness

Canadian basketball players have been starred in the NCAA, and this year's crop is no different. Here are five players to watch in NCAA's March Madness:

Jamal Murray, Kentucky

The 19-old-year guard from Kitchener, Ont., has quickly become one of the finest players ever to represent the storied Wildcats program.

He's the highest scoring freshman in school history and leads the team with 20.1 points a game.

He's also a proven big-game performer, helping Canada to a silver medal at last summer's Pan American Games. He's earned the nickname "Blue Arrow" for his bow-and-arrow celebration.

Dillon Brooks, Oregon

The forward from Mississauga, Ont., helped the Ducks to their first-ever No. 1 tournament seed. Brooks' improvement in his sophomore season has seen him start every game and lead the team in scoring (17.1 points), while shooting 47 per cent from the field.

His standout regular season saw the Canadian national team player earn All-Pac 12 honours.

Dyshawn Pierre, Dayton

The senior forward from Whitby, Ont., has bounced back from a suspension that sidelined him for the fall semester to lead the Flyers in rebounding (8.6). He is second in scoring (13.0).

Pierre has been a solid contributor to a team that has made three straight tournament appearances.

He also was part of the star-studded Canadian under-17 team that won bronze at the 2010 world championships.

Kia Nurse, Connecticut

The 20-year-old from Hamilton became a household name last summer when she led Canada to Pan Am Games gold and carried the Maple Leaf in the closing ceremonies.

She'll be in the international spotlight again at this summer's Rio Olympics. Nurse has started every game this college season as a major contributor to a Huskies team (32-0) that's seeking an unprecedented fourth consecutive women's NCAA title.

Ruth Hamblin, Oregon St

The six-foot-six "Canadian Hammer" from Houston, B.C., was named the Pac-12's defensive player of the year for the second consecutive season, and recently broke the conference record for blocks.

Hamblin is averaging 11.4 points, nine rebounds, and 3.41 blocks per game. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Jamal Murray THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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RECIPE Shrimp and Vegetable Spaghetti

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

This dish is chock full of vegetables and herbs but, more importantly, it yields lots of leftovers.

Ready in
Prep time: 20 minutes
Total time: 50 minutes
Serves 8 to 10

Ingredients
- 1 yellow zucchini, sliced in half lengthwise
- 2 portobello mushrooms, stems removed, caps scooped and halved and then cut crosswise into slices
- 1 red pepper, sliced into quarters
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 Tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 4 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 Tbsp fresh chopped oregano
- 1 Tbsp fresh chopped rosemary
- 1 Tbsp butter
- 1 lb thawed peeled deveined shrimp
- 1 box of spaghetti
- 2 large meaty tomatoes, sliced into chunks
- 1 container marinated artichoke hearts, plus a drizzle of its oil
- 1 cup feta cheese, plus some of its water
- 1 handful fresh chopped basil

Directions
1. Preheat oven to 400 F.
2. Toss the zucchini, mushrooms and red pepper with 2 Tbsp of olive oil, balsamic vinegar, 2 cloves of garlic, oregano and rosemary to coat.
3. Place vegetables on greased pan and roast in the oven; turn vegetables once and cook until tender, about 30 minutes.
4. Remove to platter and allow to cool slightly so you can handle them to slice. Slice the vegetables into bite size pieces.
5. In a large skillet over medium heat, add butter and two cloves of garlic and cook until aromatic, about 1 minute. Add the shrimp and cook until they are pink, about 5 minutes. Remove the shrimp and juices from the pan and set aside.
6. Meanwhile, in a large saucepan of salted boiling water, cook pasta according to package directions. Drain and place the pasta in a large mixing bowl.
7. Drizzle the rest of the olive oil into the pasta. Toss the vegetables, as well as the shrimp and their buttery juices into the spaghetti and serve with feta and basil.

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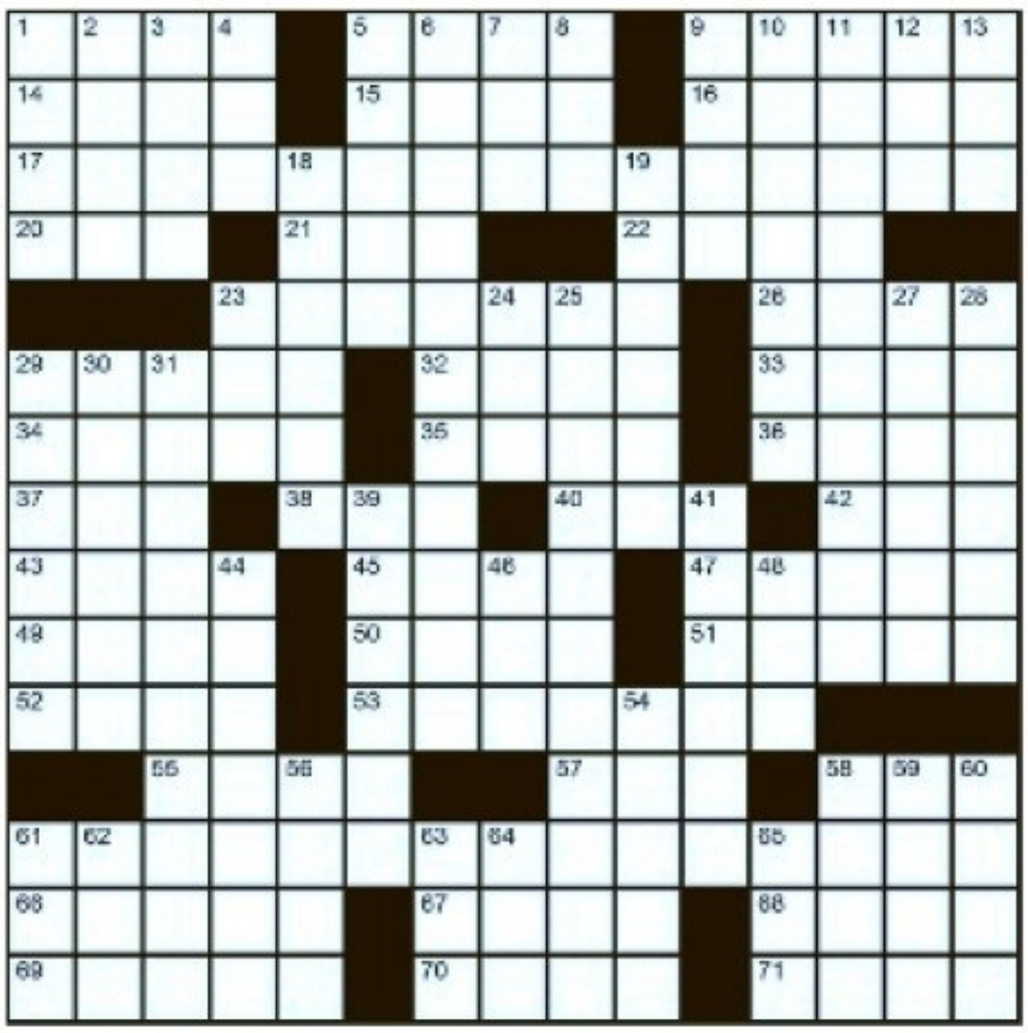
CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Irish _ of Tara (Arms of Canada symbol)
5. Performs pluses
9. Uncle on "Full House"
14. Give _ _ (Theatrically prompt)
15. Actress Jessica
16. Currency exchange fees
17. Irish playwright Samuel Beckett's famous production: 3 wds.
20. Canadian ID
21. Ms. Ryan
22. Art Deco designer
23. Chesterfield components
26. Chemical suffixes
29. Zep's "Whole _ Love"
32. Not masc./ Not fem.
33. Trigonometry ratio
34. Shreddies-eater's need: 2 wds.
35. Reaper's adage, "_ _ sow, so shall..."
36. Ernest G. Bilko's rank [abbr.]
37. Rock logo insurance co.
38. Residue variety
40. LPs replacers
42. Big song
43. Knight titles
45. Fizzy beverage
47. "Me, Myself & _" (2000)
49. Architect Mr. Saarinen
50. Banned orchard spray
51. Tightwad
52. Trim
53. Sculpture like the real one
55. Ms. de Matteo
57. Roxy Music's Brian
58. Diving bird
61. Dublin's plays place, founded in 1904: 3 wds.
66. Sir William Cornelius Van _ (Canadian Pacific Railway bigwig in the 1800s)
67. Ghost's cry!
68. Stockings
69. Question-answering options, _ _ No
70. "Michelle ma belle / _ les mots..." - The Beatles
71. Traverse

DOWN
1. Hems and _ (Hesitates)
2. Amazon Rainforest berry
3. Destroy
4. 15th Prime Minister's monogram
5. Daisy Mae's beloved
6. Song by Cdn. rock group Big Sugar: 3 wds.
7. Word's li'l meaning
8. _-mo replay
9. Florida Panthers player Jaromir
10. Me Me ...and more Me
11. Fries and coleslaw: 2 wds.
12. Sault Ste. Marie's nickname, The _
13. East: French
18. Antelope of Africa
19. Caught one's breath
23. Queen _ _. (Toronto thoroughfare)
24. Super _ (Old video game console by Nintendo, commonly)
25. Governor of Quebec, Sir _ _ aka Lord Dorchester (b.1724 - d.1808)
27. Fire truck
28. Irish _ (Sporting dog)
29. Expires
30. Comedian Conan
31. Lists of backstage demands in the world of rock: 2 wds.
39. Divine beetle in ancient Egypt
41. Big lake in Ontario
44. Maria Callas' voice
46. _ of luxury
48. River inlet
54. _ _ water (Up the proverbial creek)
56. Celebrity hairstylist Jose
58. Above
59. Constellation, _ Major
60. Really interested
61. Bible's 'your'
62. Gardening tool
63. Egg-shaped-packaging beauty brand
64. "_-hoo!"
65. Sneeze starters...

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS by Sally Brompton

Aries March 21 - April 20
Don't get emotional over things you can't control. The state of the world may at times upset you but there is only so much you can do on your own. Use the talents you were born with to help those less fortunate.

Taurus April 21 - May 21
If you have to disappoint a friend then so be it — there's no point tying yourself in knots because you don't want to hurt their feelings. Sometimes you have to speak the truth.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
There have been storm clouds in your life of late but the outlook is improving and in a week there will be plenty of sunshine in your life. On the work front, don't be confrontational.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
You are under fortunate stars but your negative attitude is making things look worse than they are. A difficult situation will work itself out, so don't give in to doom and gloom.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
What is amusing to you may not be funny to everyone else, so don't laugh too loud or too long or you could offend people. Not everyone is as laid-back as you Leo.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
If you must point out where others are going wrong at least do so with tact. If you come across as rude and uncaring you will lose the support of colleagues who could have and should have been friends.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
There have been major changes in your life but soon you'll understand why they had to happen and how they'll benefit you. Find reasons to smile — then have a wild weekend!

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Travel and social plans may get delayed today but there's no point getting annoyed. If someone lets you down just accept it — it's hardly the end of the world.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Don't be discouraged if what you've been working on these past few weeks does not seem to be making much progress. Keep plugging away and you'll get the breakthrough your efforts deserve.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
It may be wise not to make your plans public until you're 100 per cent sure you're going to go through with them. The more people who know about them, the more unnecessary pressure you will put on yourself.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
You may have a lot of tedious tasks to take care of but they won't feel like such a chore if you share the load. Call in a few favours.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
If the route you were planning to take is blocked don't get angry about it — most likely it is the universe's way of telling you that you should be taking a different path. Few things in life happen without a reason.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

	1				5			
3			1	9		2		
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